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May 7, 1999

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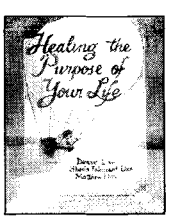

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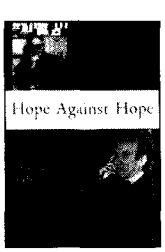

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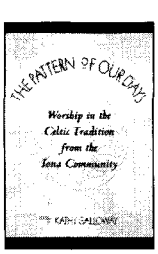

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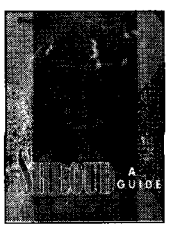

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COMMONWEAL

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Rand Richards Cooper
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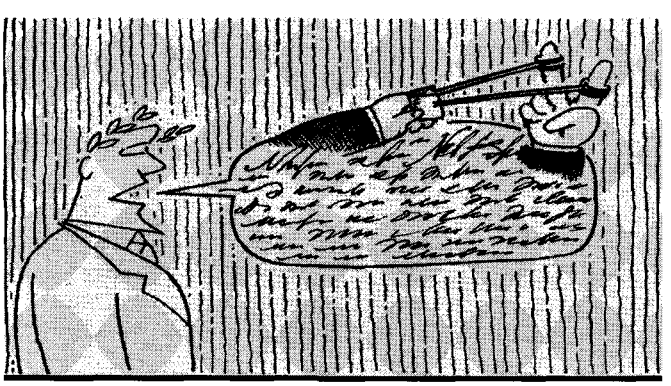

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To the Editors

Onward Christian soldiers?

Your April 9 editorial ["Stick to Your Guns"] suggests that NATO should carry on. Have we not seen enough destruction and bloodshed? It does not take a military strategist to determine the "strike against Yugoslavia" was everything but successful in achieving its goals. The bombs have given Serbian militia the excuse to drive people out, and have united behind Milosevic a people who have every reason to wish him out of government.

Apparently you believe in bombing a nation into compliance. Do you feel the Serbs could be bombed into democracy?

I would expect a faith-based magazine like *Commonweal* to show some creativity in imagining alternatives to violence. The logic of war has seduced too many, and if the Christian response has no better way to suggest, then the stones will have to cry out and there will be no end to war.

HANSULI GERBER
Tramelan, Switzerland

The writer is with the Mennonite Central Committee for Europe.

Drop your guns

Your editorial of April 9 is bad advice. NATO and the United States should not "stick to their chosen course of action."

No benefit that the Kosovars might possibly receive from our intervention, and it is minimal to nonexistent so far, is going to offset the massive damage being done by our bombing campaign, which will be magnified if we follow the misguided recommendations of some (not you) to introduce ground troops and to arm the KLA.

We are misusing our well-trained and dedicated military by ordering them to enforce a poorly thought-out policy. We are making NATO look foolish. We are trashing the economies and political stability in the whole of the Balkans, not to mention our relationship with Russia.

Doing nothing militarily is a viable moral option. We don't have to "do something," if what we do will not be helpful.

We urge that the bombing campaign be stopped, that we cut our losses, and start providing real help to the Kosovar refugees.

MARY C. and E. THOMAS MCCARTHY
Berkeley, Calif.

An immoral war

In contrast to the stand taken by *Commonweal*, I find NATO's actions in Kosovo, as measured by just-war criteria, to be purposeless, immoral, and disproportionate.

1. Just cause: This is a civil war and a religious-tribal war that has been going on for centuries. To involve ourselves in such a war is to enter a morass from which we can never extricate ourselves.

2. Competent authority: Without authorization by Congress, which alone has the power to declare war, and in contravention of the United Nations charter, U.S. planes are attacking a nation which has not threatened us at all.

3. Right intention. Strangely, our mis-leaders change our objective by the day. We must "win," but nobody can tell us what that means.

4. Last resort: The matter was never seriously discussed in Congress or referred to the UN; it results from a unilateral decision by the president.

5. Probability of success: Since we don't know the objectives of this war, how can we judge?

6. Proportionality of goals: What are they?

7. Proportionality of means: To judge by the precedents set in our war with Iraq, where U.S. planes bombed such targets as hydroelectric power plants and water purification facilities, leading to hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths, especially among children and the elderly, I have no confidence in the willingness of American forces to reject the use of disproportionate or otherwise illicit methods of warfare.

PETER J. RIGA
Houston, Tex.

Has Milosevic won?

Your editorial "Stick to Your Guns," misses one major point: Might Slobodan Milosevic already have met his nationalist goal of removing ethnic Albanians from Kosovo *and* gained a negotiating stick against NATO? How will NATO help the Kosovars return to their homeland safely without ground troups? There seems to be no truly just solution short of returning people to a secure Kosovar homeland.

ALEX MIKULICH
Chicago, Ill.

Semantic shortfalls

Your editorial evokes my own soul-searching over these issues; it reminds me of the days in my Master's program at Boston College. Professor John Heineman, the most magnificent lecturer I have ever known, would correct my papers on Central Europe, and I would say: "That's just semantics."

His invariable reply: "Semantics are important."

In your very well-written editorial, there are some semantic problems. Should your first noun about Slobodan Milosevic really be "arrogance"? How about "mendacity," "butchery," or "genocide"?

Perhaps, as that last noun becomes more obvious, you might also be wide of the mark to call NATO's unanimity

(Continued on page 28)

In the mail ■ Letters written in response to *Commonweal*'s special April 9 issue, "Keeping Colleges Catholic," including one from Bishop John J. Leibrecht, chairman of the U.S. bishops' *Ex corde ecclesiae* implementation committee, will appear in the May 21 issue.

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Sit tight

Fearful people fleeing the rampage of terrorists—the odd juxtaposition on April 20 of adolescent mayhem in Littleton, Colorado, and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo may be an accident of the ubiquitous TV camera. But the murders at Columbine High School did pose again the question that haunts us whenever people turn to violence: Could it have been prevented? The young men in Littleton who murdered thirteen people, injured twenty-three, and finally killed themselves had shown animosity to other people and to the community's values in ways that begged for intervention. Yet nothing was done.

By contrast, we have intervened in Kosovo. But has it done any good? Some of our readers think not (*see*, Correspondence, page 4). NATO's decision to intervene was not made easily or hastily. Belligerence, abuse, rape, and murder in Bosnia through the first part of this decade brought Europe and the United States reluctantly and even shamefacedly to the realization that violence in the Balkans would not be contained by salvos of diplomatic protestation and threats of military action never acted upon. Nor could it be hidden: CNN is watching. In this part of the world, it appears, real deterrence requires real action.

And so after the failure of the latest diplomatic efforts at Rambouillet, there began a slow and deliberate bombing of Yugoslavia. Over a month later it continues and now includes Serbian targets in Kosovo and Montenegro. It has not deterred ethnic cleansing, although it did not inspire it either. The Yugoslav military had plans underway for "Operation Horseshoe" last autumn, if not earlier. The Kosovar Albanian guerrillas (the KLA) would be defeated by terrorizing and driving out the Kosovar Albanian population.

But did the bombing accelerate the pace and brutality with which the Serbs expelled the Albanians from Kosovo? Will the bombing end Milosevic's reign of terror in Kosovo, and elsewhere in the Balkans? Will those who have been expelled be allowed to return home any time soon—or any time at all? In other words, if intervention has not worked yet, is it likely to work ever?

At this point, there are few certain answers, and few are likely to emerge in the near future. That very uncertainty feeds the urge to take another, supposedly more decisive step. The cry to send ground troops accelerates, certainly on editorial pages. More surprisingly, a majority of public opinion in the United States and Europe favors ground troops immediately (a position argued in these pages by our columnist William Pfaff, page 8). British Prime Minister Tony Blair, though muted in Washington during NATO's fiftieth-anniversary meeting, has been a strong proponent of ground troops. For the moment, NATO is said to be "updating" its plans for a ground force. Proponents and opponents alike appear agreed on at least this: that sending ground troops would raise the stakes enormously, either compelling a Yugoslav agreement or taking a fatal step into a quagmire.

That is not a move to make without first examining some of the assumptions NATO seemed to be operating on when it decided to begin the air campaign.

Anyone who has followed the decade-long struggle in the former Yugoslavia knows that the war drums have not been beating in the United States or Western Europe. James Baker, when George Bush's secretary of state, remarked that we

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have no dog in this fight. He was right. American national interests, defined in classically narrow terms of secure borders and material survival, were not at stake in 1991; and arguably they are not at stake now. Most of Europe held the same view. So Yugoslavia ripped itself apart while the West stood by. The shelling of Sarajevo by the Serbs was the most infamous of the crimes televised around the world, but it was not the only city destroyed. Nor were the Muslims and Croats the only victims, as John Garvey points out in his column (page 7). Serbs too were driven from their homes. The carnage became intolerable, all sides were exhausted, and finally the UN intervened. There followed the Dayton Accords, masterminded by Richard Holbrooke with the acquiescence of Slobodan Milosevic. A modicum of peace is maintained in Bosnia by an international force of armed troops.

The lesson of ethnic cleansing, at least the one the West took to heart, was that should intervention come, it had to be sooner rather than later, when lives might actually be saved and atrocities prevented. The photos of mutilated bodies, concentration camps, and endless columns of refugees were simply more than the human eye could bear to watch over and over and over again.

NATO is, nonetheless, a reluctant warrior and the United States perhaps among the more reluctant of its members. Even now, Vietnam remains a painful example of military arrogance and overreaching; a ground war in Kosovo evokes those dreadful memories.

Being a reluctant warrior has, at least this merit: It makes everyone very cautious. The expectation that Milosevic would accept a negotiated settlement after a token show of force was not unreasonable. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright shared it with many others, including Richard Holbrooke. That the bombing campaign began slowly—hampered in part by bad weather—may have been a mistake, but one based on a legitimate moral calculation: Milosevic no more than anyone else wanted a repeat of Bosnia. That expectation proved wrong and the bombing campaign has been extended to new targets.

Reluctant warriors are also prudent. Given that NATO was born of a war where carpet bombing of cities was practiced by both Allies and Axis nations, it is progress to have a war where targets are carefully chosen, missiles are remarkably accurate, and civilians are not the primary targets of direct bombing. Civilians are hit, nonetheless, and ultimately the destruction of infrastructure, even military-related infrastructure, will affect many more civilians. And here, just-war analysis requires that the means be in concert with the ends for which this war is being conducted. (Bruce Russett, professor of international relations at Yale, will offer a full analysis in our next issue, May 21.)

What then of the call for ground troops? There will have to be armed troops on the ground at some point, certainly to usher the refugees back home and to safeguard what will likely be a fragile peace, or as the phrase goes, a semi-permissive environment. But before that? Would a ground war any more than the air war assure the return of the Kosovars?

As we struggle to balance means and ends in this conflict, we need to consider the loss not only of civilian lives in Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, and perhaps neighboring Albania and Macedonia, but the lives of NATO troops as well.

We also need to reflect on the practices of the Yugoslav army as well as police and paramilitary groups who show no compunction in using civilians as human shields and hostages. Why provide them with any more opportunities than they now have? NATO tank and infantry assaults would have to hold their fire in the face of such tactics. The Serbs pride themselves on their capacity for resistance and their ability to disperse men and materials and to fight a guerrilla war. Why give them the chance to slaughter more Kosovar Albanians along with NATO troops? Let them sit there and wait. It is their war. They started it. Let them decide when they have had enough bombing.

In saying that we have no national interest in the war over Kosovo, we are not saying there is no interest whatsoever. This is a war of a very different kind than the West has fought before, born of the movement for human rights and their increasing observance in international law. It is no defense against this war to argue that these slaughters have gone on before, and ended only when both sides had exhausted themselves. Today there is a big difference. Now we see the atrocities, for it is also a war born of round-the-clock TV coverage. We cannot turn away from the evidence. Not as we did in Bosnia.

The viability of NATO may be on the line, as many argue. But so is the viability of a worldwide movement to acknowledge the dignity of every human person, and their right to life and to security—even from attacks by their own government or former government. Human rights are what the war in Kosovo is all about. While it goes on, we must do everything we can to observe those human rights: we must do all we can to feed and protect the refugees and we must strive scrupulously to avoid civilian casualties, among the Serbs no less than others. Finally, just because soldiers are paid to fight and are willing to fight does not mean that their lives are any less precious. Let the bombing campaign against legitimate targets continue. Let NATO talk about and plan for the use of ground troops. Let the Serbs consider the tragedy they have let loose on the Kosovars and on themselves.

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JOHN GARVEY

ORTHODOX VIEWS

Religion & war in the Balkans

It would be putting it mildly to say that I am less persuaded than the editors of *Commonweal* ("Stick to Your Guns," April 9) that our current bombing campaign against Serbia was a good idea. "We had to do something...." Well, we were quite capable of doing nothing in Rwanda, when a real genocide was going on, and the United States made sure that the UN did nothing when it might have prevented those murders. I am not alone in suspecting that race and a feeling that Europe matters more than Africa had something to do with this.

Still, granting this, it could be said that we have learned the error of our ways. Now we are doing something.

We should indeed have done *something*: But was bombing, after proposing unacceptable terms to the Serbs, the only or the best thing we could have done? So little real planning or understanding of the tangle that is Balkan politics was involved in this effort, and we broadcast in advance the fact that we would not put in ground troops—an invitation to the Serbian army and police (the greater threat to Kosovars) to do their worst. We call the brutal actions of Slobodan Milosevic a genocide, which, terrible as it is, it is not. One complicating fact is that some members of the Kosovo Liberation Army in fact want a greater Albania, including not only Albania but parts of Montenegro and Macedonia, something unacceptable to anyone in the rest of Europe. Some KLA partisans wanted Kosovo ethnically cleansed of Serbs, and NATO has now become their air force. A president with no sense of foreign policy suddenly leads us into the beginnings of a situation not unlike Vietnam, where we also had the arrogance to think that our enemies, cowards all, could be punished into submission, which we ourselves, of course, never could be.

Serbs, many of whom have a bottomless capacity for self-pity and the adolescent feeling that no one understands them, remember that they were also victims of ethnic cleansing in the recent Balkan troubles, forced out of Croation territory with the complicity of the United States. Understandably, they find Bill Clinton unpersuasive as a moralist on this subject, and this adds to their historical sense of being perpetually aggrieved, and to their steady denial of the magnitude of the horrors their countrymen are committing. We have no clue at all as to how the Balkans will look at the end of what promises to be a very long engagement.

At the same time, the actions of the Serbs were planned, and have been astonishingly brutal. Although only the Clinton administration seems surprised that bombing made things worse, the horrible efficiency of an obviously planned evil is surprising, and it is easy to see why many people have a visceral support of the bombing.

The church I serve is in the Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America. In recent years we have seen an influx of immigrants from Albania. Orthodox Albanians tend to be from the southern part of the country, and ordinarily do not have relatives in the predominantly Muslim north and Kosova (as Albanians call the province). I've been asked by many people where the sympathies of Orthodox Albanians lie in this struggle, given the support for Serbia among Orthodox Greeks and Russians. The media have presented an image of a kind of Orthodox ethnic lock step. It is misleading. The majority of the people in our congregation certainly backed the bombing, feeling, like many Americans, that something had to be done.

While the traditionally Orthodox countries of Russia and Greece and Serbia identify being Greek or Russian or Serbian with being Orthodox, this is by no means a universal Orthodox reality. Albanians, Lebanese, and Indians (to take three countries where Orthodox minorities make up important parts of the population) are, in an interesting way, closer to America in not identifying religion with ethnicity. There are three religions in Albania. The last more-or-less decent census showed 70 percent of the people coming from Islamic backgrounds—an Ottoman legacy—with 20 percent identified as Orthodox, and 10 percent as Catholic. A Lebanese might be Muslim, Druze, Maronite Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, or Orthodox. In the south of India, the Malankarese Orthodox are an important Christian minority. Interestingly, the anti-ecumenical strain in some Orthodox circles is not to be found in any of these countries, but has its greatest

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strength in those where Orthodoxy and nationhood are entangled. (It is also found among some American converts to Orthodoxy, who often tend to define Orthodoxy as the refuge from the churches they have fled.)

Archbishop Anastasios, the head of the Orthodox Church of Albania, has asked for aid in helping the refugees who have poured over the border from Kosovo. The church is already at work, but its resources are stretched to the limit. Collections to help Archbishop Anastasios in his efforts are being taken up in the parishes of the Orthodox Church in America. Quite apart from the obvious imperative found in Matthew 25, it is important for Muslims who have suffered at the hands of people who consider themselves Orthodox Christians to find help and consolation from other Orthodox Christians, who refuse to see them as anything other than suffering brothers and sisters.

If there is any light at all in this dark time it is to be found in the outpouring of compassion—compassion from Albanians, people who have almost nothing themselves, who have gone to refugee camps offering to take people into their homes. And compassion in this country as well: One Jewish family on Long Island called me. They had rushed out to buy tents and blankets and phoned to ask where they should send them. I gave them a couple of addresses, and when I said that aid agencies had suggested that sending them money would be more helpful than sending them materials, which can be obtained more easily and less expensively in Europe, the family asked for the names and addresses of the agencies, so that they could send checks. There have been many similar calls to all of our churches, and no doubt to Albanian Catholic churches, and to mosques.

At the same time, there are Albanians volunteering to help the Kosova Liberation Army; Serbs who are willing to overlook, defend, or regard as tragically inevitable, the use of rape and the murder of families; and Americans and Europeans who speak, as people die by the thousands, of the need to make NATO threats seem credible. (Clinton and Milosevic will no doubt die in their beds.) When well-preserved Incan mummies were recently recovered in the Andes—victims of ritual murders committed, as all of them are, to bring about a desired end—I thought first of how strange that society was; and then I thought again. Not that much has changed. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS

WILLIAM PFAFF

A NEW KIND OF WAR

Only civilians are killed

A student's letter to a Paris newspaper observed that NATO has created something without precedent in human history: a war in which only civilians are killed. To be exact, the observation should be amended to say: "only Kosovar civilians" (in principle). The exceptional incidents in which NATO operations have killed Serb civilians have been treated by command, press, and NATO governments as scandalous exceptions requiring apologies to the Serbs. The apology is that in ground attacks from 15,000 feet up, mistakes can happen. NATO's pilots would be in danger if they flew under 15,000 feet.

On the other hand, Kosovar civilians die and are brutalized daily, but protecting them is not a part of this phase of NATO's operations. When NATO reaches the phase in its program when attacking Serbian forces from less than 15,000 feet is deemed safe, Slobodan Milosevic's police and terrorists are likely to have emptied Kosovo of its ethnic Albanians. That is *his* program. He is much closer to success than is NATO.

What is going on is a freakish mutation of war. Serb forces cleanse Kosovo of its ethnic Albanians, expelling the population, by plausible accounts murdering men and raping young women, with virtually no opposition from NATO. NATO is bombing air defenses, electric plants, bridges, empty barracks and other objectives of strategic warfare, because this is the war it planned. The fact that these bombings have no possibility of seriously affecting what is going on in Kosovo (before it is too late to make a difference) has no apparent effect upon the NATO command or upon the political council that sets NATO priorities.

NATO has its own war. The Serbs have theirs. Eventually Serbia will have no more bridges or refineries. Kosovo will have no more people. Since NATO's announced purpose is to defend the Albanian population of Kosovo, Milosevic will have won.

This strategic bombing spares pilots risk, which for some years has been the principal responsibility assigned to U.S. commanders—hence of the NATO command, which the United States dominates. NATO's rationale for fighting the war which suits its human and equipment priorities is that, logically (the logic of Pentagon planning), these attacks will so punish the Serbian leadership as to make it (in turn) logical for it to abandon its program of ethnic purification—the very program that has kept Milosevic in power for the last decade. Strategic bombing is supposed to persuade him to withdraw his forces from Kosovo. This will create the "permissive environment" NATO seeks, in which its forces can enter Kosovo as peacekeepers rather than fighters.

In recent days there have been reports, denied but plausible, that NATO ground forces nonetheless are being prepared for Kosovo—implying that NATO's repeated denials of ground intervention have been deception. Unfortunately, there is reason to doubt that these forces will be committed to combat. My own pessimistic interpretation—which I hope will be disproved—is that the 82nd Airborne has gone to Albania to protect the U.S. Army's Apache helicopters, and the Apache helicopters are

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in Albania to protect the 82nd Airborne and associated NATO forces.

It seems likely that these and other troop reinforcements are being prepared to defend Albania against Serbian intrusion, possibly to establish enclaves of refugee camps in zones of Serb-ceded "permissive environment" inside Kosovo, and to try to stabilize the extremely dangerous situations in Macedonia and Montenegro, already under attack from forces loyal to Belgrade. If such a non-combat deployment were eventually accompanied by negotiated or *de facto* partition of Kosovo, the outcome would be one which some in Washington think could, meretriciously, be presented as a NATO victory. Presentation is all.

Yet there still is time for NATO to redeem itself (and confound the pessimism I have expressed) by launching serious land operations to expel Serbian forces from Kosovo, and reestablishing the deported Kosovars in what remain of their homes—the avowed NATO objective. The NATO powers might still declare, and make, Kosovo an international protectorate, autonomously governed, whose eventual status would remain subject to broad international determination and negotiation with a Belgrade successor-government.

But the window of opportunity is closing, and the NATO public awaits leadership. Clear majorities of opinion exist today in most NATO countries in support of ground intervention. Such majorities are fragile, but what destroys them is evidence of futility. Success reinforces them.

What they are being given is evidence of futility: incompetent planning, tactical sterility, inadaptability on the part of NATO, shameful preoccupation with the security of its own forces at the expense of those the campaign was meant to protect, and repeated tactical defeat by Milosevic. If the Yugoslav president's forces are not cleared from Kosovo, he will have won this war, whatever spin Brussels and Washington try to place on the outcome. The twentieth century will have ended with a bang, a prospect NATO's macabre "celebration" in Washington neither conceded nor prevented. □

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OF SEVERAL MINDS

E.J. DIONNE, Jr.

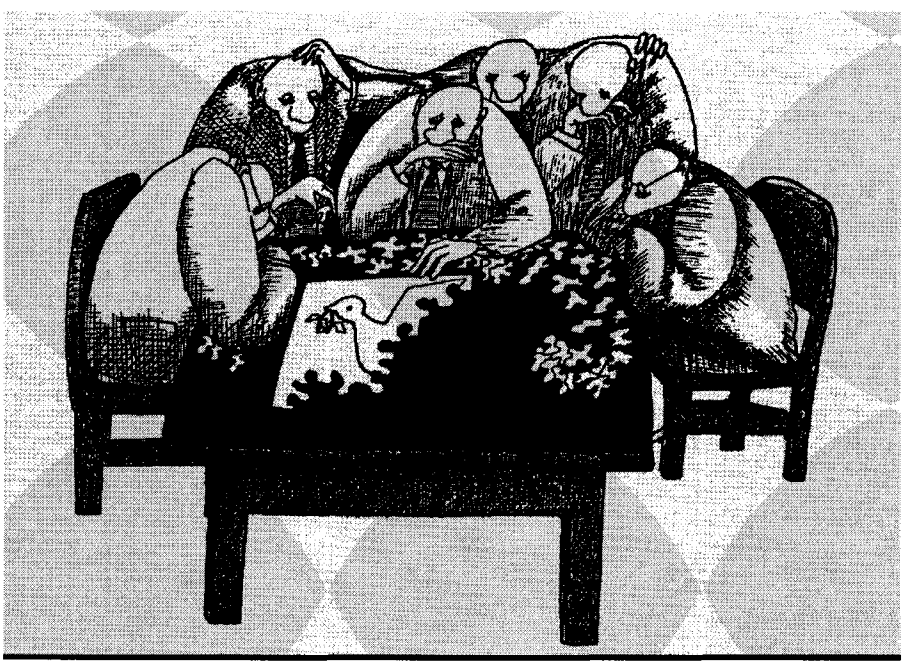
UNLIKELY HAWKS

The war on the left

It "is not where I usually find myself," mused Senator Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.), who is far more comfortable opposing military action than supporting it. Wellstone is one of a substantial number of progressives who have traditionally opposed American intervention overseas but now find themselves standing up for action against Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Watching the bombs fall with his support doesn't come easy. "Every day," Wellstone says, "I find myself with a knot in my stomach."

House Democratic Whip David Bonior, of Michigan, was the bane of Ronald Reagan's Central American policy and draws inspiration from the Catholic left, much of which leans toward pacifism. But Bonior not only supports the air campaign, he also favors using ground troops if they're necessary. He cites his background as a Ukrainian-American and memories of Stalin's use of famine against the Ukrainian people. "This kind of stuff grabs me in a very visceral way," Bonior says. "The humanitarian interest here is so overwhelming and compelling that to ignore it would be to ignore the sacrifices made by our fathers and grandfathers and their fathers throughout the last century for the values we cherish and care about, for a free and democratic Europe."

It's not true, as has sometimes been said in recent weeks, that this war has bred no antiwar movement on the left. Some long-standing antiwar voices—at the *Nation* and the *Progressive* magazines, for example—have denounced American action. In an open letter to President Bill Clinton earlier this month, Tom Hayden, the arch foe of the Vietnam War who is now a Democratic state senator in California, said the president's policies are "deepening this refugee crisis and creating the basis for intervention on the ground, just as happened in the escalating engagement in South Vietnam." In a line that might



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well be repeated by Republican opponents of the war, Hayden asked pointedly: "If our policy is truly to threaten human rights violators with force, why is our government stressing diplomacy and trade with the Chinese government?" He concluded: "Don't allow the Balkans to become a Vietnam, Mr. President, in order to avoid a Munich."

But the metaphor inspiring the wing of the Left that supports bombing is not Munich but the Holocaust. Wellstone says he was struck by remarks from some of Germany's leaders in support of this intervention: "They said they had asked their parents, 'Where were you?' and they don't want their children to ask the same question."

"The American Left is divided," says Katrina vanden Heuvel, editor of the *Nation* and an opponent of the Clinton policy. "There's a Left that compels us to condemn NATO unilateralism and military intervention that violates international law. But there's a conscience that says you can't remain silent in the face of ethnic cleansing."

Vanden Heuvel comes down on the side that says the means of war are "wrong and immoral" and that the United States missed earlier opportunities to strengthen democratic institutions and a democratic opposition inside Serbia and Kosovo.

The split, says Robert Borosage, a longtime liberal-left activist, originates in the support many on the left gave to America's intervention in Haiti, and their criticism of inaction in Rwanda and foot-dragging in preventing slaughter in Bosnia. "Among progressives and those who want a humanitarian standard to be part of American foreign policy, there has been a greater and greater affection for the humanitarian use of military force," he says. But Borosage shares vanden Heuvel's worries about an expansive interventionist role for NATO and the pressures the war will create to increase the military budget.

Wellstone, whom the American Left often looks to for a voice in the halls of Congress, may embody all of its qualms within himself. Unlike Kosovo hawks such as Bonior, he's wary of authorizing ground troops to win the war. The resolution offered recently by Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) to "use all necessary force" is too "open-ended," Wellstone says.

Yet Wellstone sees the United States as having a moral obligation to restore the rights and safety of displaced Kosovars. "Most people I know are really agonizing over this," he says. "They are in a quandary."

But with a war under way, the refugees displaced, and the United States committed to returning Kosovars home, turning back without securing this objective would be both a humanitarian and a policy disaster. This, too, Wellstone knows, which is why he has those knots in his stomach. □

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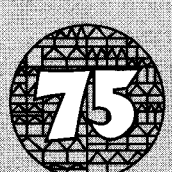
From the archives



Throughout 1999, Commonweal *will be celebrating its 75th anniversary. Here from the December 10, 1954 issue is an editorial on Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.*

From 1950 until today *The Commonweal* has been a consistent opponent of Wisconsin's junior senator....But we have insisted all along that this is not a "Catholic" fight, that in it no Catholic had a right to involve the church. Thus when certain of Senator McCarthy's critics urged the bishops of this country to go on record as condemning the senator we said, in a lead editorial, that such urgings were highly ill-advised, that this was a struggle in which the church must not be asked to commit herself—on either side....For to bind the church to the temporal fortunes of men—whether they be heroes or demagogues—is to betray the church.

Those who would bind the church to the declining fortunes of Mr. McCarthy, however, seem to have been particularly active recently and, untypical as their efforts may be, they can yet do limitless damage to the church. For example,...petitions against censuring Senator McCarthy have been circulated by teachers in a few Catholic schools around the country, some official parish organizations have pushed these petitions as a form of "Catholic Action," and a few priests have spoken against censure from their pulpits. These things...have, justly, caused scandal.

We believe that adequate grounds for censuring Senator McCarthy exist, but we would oppose the circulation of a censure petition under official or semi-official Catholic auspices quite as strongly as we oppose and deplore the pro-McCarthy activities which are taking place....When such things happen, it must be made clear by other Catholics that they represent only an ill-advised few and in no way involve the whole of Catholic opinion on Senator McCarthy, opinion which, happily, remains divided....What should unite Catholics, regardless of their opinions, is a determination not to involve the church.

THE EDITORS

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TOM WOLFE, MATERIAL BOY

Embellishing a doctrine

Rand Richards Cooper

Tom Wolfe splashed into the national consciousness in the summer of 1970 with "Radical Chic," his *New York* magazine account of a fund-raising party for the Black Panthers thrown by Leonard Bernstein and wife in their Park Avenue duplex. The piece was a *succès de scandale* that impressed by the impudent cunning of its commando raid on limousine liberalism. Here indeed was a "new" journalism, freed to be sly, to slander by implication and the damning detail. When Wolfe described maids serving from "gadrooned silver platters," and a guest inwardly rhapsodizing over Roquefort *hors d'oeuvres* ("It's the way the dry sackiness of the nuts tiptoes up against the dour savor of the cheese...") as the Panthers held forth on revolutionary violence, you didn't need to know what a gadroon was to see that the Bernsteins and their socialite friends were in trouble. Eavesdropping not only on conversations, but on minds, Wolfe plumbed an inner ooze-of-consciousness sticky with self-flattery, covetousness, and other thoughts too naughtily incorrect (as we say nowadays) to utter. This was a journalism of the fox let loose in the chicken coop.

Through the 1970s, America's least welcome party guest applied his Day-Glo conservatism to architecture (*From Bauhaus to Our House*) and art (*The Painted Word*), witty polemics defending your and my sensible aesthetic intuitions—that paintings should be beautiful, and houses comfy—against a cabal of modernists bent on our eternal bafflement. Wolfe's shrewd co-optation of hip style in service of a meat-and-potatoes cultural agenda won countless admirers, who hailed him as a brilliant satirist with a voice extravagant as America itself. And when inevitably these fans began to wonder what a *novel* by that voice might be like, could anyone blame Wolfe for being tempted? Just think about it: the master, unfettered...his wicked intelligence, his vaunted powers of observation...unconstrained...a big book...an *important* book....

Deny it if you will!

Wolfe's plunge into novel writing came accompanied by an eight-thousand-word literary manifesto (in the November 1989 *Harper's*), "Stalking the Billion-Footed Beast." With typical brio, the essay asserted that the raucous complexity of America had overwhelmed a generation of writers. Writing programs across the land were cranking out "young people with serious literary ambitions [who] were no longer interested in the metropolis or any other big, rich slices of contemporary life." Minimalism, metafiction, magical realism, and other innovations were actually safe refuges, *cul de sacs* where our novelists could "avert their eyes" from the roaring challenge of American reality. To rectify the sorry state of affairs, Wolfe looked back for inspiration to the titans of realism—to Sinclair Lewis, and to Balzac and Zola, writers he credited with the novel's highest fulfillment, "a true and powerful picture of individuals in society." If that sounded like the nineteenth century talking, so much the better. Against modernism's emphasis on psychological states, interiority, and the writer-as-creator, Wolfe stressed objectivity, society, and the writer-as-recorder. This last was crucial. Our novelists had to stop dreaming and start...interviewing! Conjuring Zola tramping into coal mines and Lewis at Chatauqua meetings, "doggedly taking notes on five-by-eight cards," Wolfe urged "a highly detailed realism based on reporting" that would once again give America "a literature worthy of her vastness." Thus the man who had revived journalism by infusing it with fiction would now save fiction by handing novelists pencil and notebook and shoving them out the door. And when no one volunteered to go first, Wolfe manfully stepped to the plate and took a whack at it himself.

Rand Richards Cooper *is the author of two works of fiction,* The Last to Go *and* Big As Life. *His criticism appears regularly in the* New York Times Book Review.

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Well, two novels have sailed over the fence so far, and as advertised, they are *big*. *Bonfire of the Vanities* weighed in at 659 pages, and the current opus, *A Man in Full* (Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, $28.95)—another saga of a wealthy overreacher stretched on the rack of modern American life—runs to 742. *A Man in Full* charts the ruin of Charlie Croker, an aging Georgia Tech gridiron-hero-*cum*-highly-leveraged-Atlanta-business-king, beset by creditors eyeing his office tower, jet, *and* twenty-nine-thousand-acre quail-hunting plantation. Wolfe propels toward him the *current* star of Tech's football team, Fareek Fanon, black and poor and soon to be charged with date raping the (rich white) daughter of Croker's best friend, a major player in Atlanta's business elite. The city's (black) mayor, meanwhile, faces reelection worries and a looming race crisis. And *also* meanwhile...in distant California, a hard-working Croker Foods employee loses his job and begins a harrowing odyssey that by strange twists of fate will bring him...guess where? Toss in assorted trophy wives, scavenging lawyers, and lavish mansions, and away we go. It's a sprawling plot built on headline themes, race *and* sex *and* money *and* politics—a meganovel crammed to bursting with all that is sensational in American life.

Wolfe doesn't write the whole person. Tellingly, his* Harper's *essay proposes "status traits modified by personality" as the key to writing characters....

As for the promised realistic detail, *A Man in Full* has scads of it: trade terms from "debt defalcation" to "Peel yo cap!"; the demographics of each Atlanta neighborhood; and endless descriptions of décor. Where Balzac believed that rooms reveal their occupants, Wolfe outdoes him, giving us "burled tupelo maple" and "cruciform mullions," "ogee curves" and "white industrial muntins"—architecture as erotica. His reporter's notebook, meanwhile, yields well-researched set pieces, including a wildly technical—and X-rated—scene in which Croker's prize stallion is put to stud before a group of astonished weekend guests. Wolfe's goal was to "take real life and spread it across the pages of a book"; and to the extent that real life means knowing how loan officers choreograph their intimidation of a delinquent $300-million borrower, or how the pickers operate their tuggers in the freezer unit of a food wholesaler, he succeeds brilliantly.

But what of the real, inner lives of men and women? *A Man in Full* displays a repertoire of bravura emotional effects, from the rage of the mighty at finding their power challenged, to the chewy misery of coveting someone else's house, wife, life. But in lull moments, Wolfe's people are made to say—and think—most unlikely things. Listen to the mayor of Atlanta, stumping for civic harmony: "Nothing, least of all a vile canard like that, should be allowed to tear this city asunder...." Or an *arriviste* African-American lawyer dismayed by the excesses of a black college-student party: "Brothers! Sisters! Is *this* why you've become the *jeunesse dorée* of Black America?" French has always served Wolfe as a trusty marker of luxury and pretension. It's one thing to season your essays with piquant *mots justes*, however, and another to have backwoods, Georgia-Cracker Cap'm Charlie Croker thinking them ("Aw, this was *esprit de l'escalier* stuff, as the French say"). Impartially Wolfe spreads around his own pet phrases. Here's Charlie, recalling courting his second wife: "She made him feel like a kid, like a twenty-year-old in the season of the rising sap." Conrad, the Croker Foods employee, ruing an unhappy marriage: "He was only twenty-three! Still in the season of the rising sap!" Coach Buck McNutter on his star's indiscretions: "You get some kid twenty or twenty-one years old, and he's in the season of the rising sap...." Such echoes sound like telltale signs of a writer's impatience at having to differentiate his characters, both from each other and from himself.

Sensational themes and plot, scandals in opulent settings, interchangeable characters—has Wolfe committed a novel that, to borrow a phrase, does not rise to the level of art? Writing in the *New Yorker*, John Updike judged *A Man in Full* "entertainment, not literature," while Norman Mailer, in the *New York Review of Books*, called it an "adroit commercial counterfeit," designed for those who like their heroes pure, their plots sentimental, and their protagonists' thoughts cozily predictable. "Mega-bestseller readers," Mailer observes, "do not want to ponder any truly unexpected revelations. Reality might lie out there, but that is not why they are reading." He accuses Wolfe of cynically dumbing-down his novel—"writing a bestseller with conscious intent."

As an example of how *A Man in Full* can be, to quote Mailer, "so good and so empty all at once," consider Wolfe's treatment of Raymond Peepgass, a loan officer involved in the unraveling of Charlie Croker. His own life in chaos (nasty separation, dead-end career), Raymond concocts a risky, illegal scheme to acquire Croker properties cheap through foreclosure. Eager to enlist Croker's embittered ex-wife, Martha, in funding the scam, he drives out to her lavish house. And what do we get when Wolfe takes us inside his character at this fateful juncture? A catalogue of Martha's wealth, and how agog our man is at it. A "silver tray with gadrooned edges" [!!]; saucers with handles "designed in flamboyant swoops"; the Georg Jensen silverware; and on and on. "Viscerally he could sense how much the sugar bowl, a mere sugar bowl, must have cost, which was in fact $1,250....The luxury of it all coursed through Peepgass's central nervous system...." In Mailer's indictment, this Peepgass-in-paradise bit would seem to be one of those smoking-gun moments when Wolfe opts for entertainment over literature—a mega-bestselling author turning the scene into "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" (complete with brand

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names and price tags) while turning his back, as Mailer charges, to "the real complexity of men and women."

Or maybe...Wolfe doesn't believe in that kind of complexity. To be sure, what made fans slaver at the thought of Wolfe-as-novelist was partly a premonition of how well his wicked insights into people would play as fiction. And yet the hilarious sketches tossed off in such essays as "The Me Decade" (Germaine Greer in a London restaurant, setting fire to her hair out of boredom!) were the opposite of novelistic, a kind of blitzkrieg caricature. "The Me Decade" was not fiction, but pop sociology with a satirical thrust. It had a thesis—that American prosperity had exploded old restraints, igniting an indulgent religion of the self—and if certain *techniques* of fiction came into play (irony, interior monologue, vivid description), it was to push the thesis. Similarly, reducing Leonard Bernstein in "Radical Chic" to a mass of liberal contradictions was not a portrayal of a man but a pathology report on the times. Wolfe's satiric/diagnostic reduction of individuals to symptoms made for brilliant cultural criticism. But a novel—especially the old-fashioned realist novel he pledged in his *Harper's* essay to write, that dealt in "what truly presses upon the heart of the individual"—requires the whole person.

Wolfe doesn't write the whole person. Tellingly, his *Harper's* essay proposes "status traits modified by personality" as the key to writing characters: a "technique," he says, for "portraying the innermost life of the individual." The formulation suggests a writer interested less in people themselves than in people illuminated, or revealed, in the light of an idea. Status is Wolfe's great subject, his *raison d'écriver*. It lay behind "Radical Chic" and "The Me Decade"; and his later writings about art and architecture are really exposés of status maneuvers in the *professions* of art and architecture. Indeed, his career has consisted in playing a hundred jazzy variations on the homey theme of keeping up with the Joneses.

No other writer—living or dead—can touch Wolfe on his subject. What his characters wear, what they drive (or wish they drove), where they went to school (or didn't), how much they earn (and why it's never enough), their beer of choice, music of choice, living room furniture of choice: he engages the hermeneutics of status with the crazed comprehensiveness of an *idiot savant* (or a Ph.D. from Yale). So too the narcissism, megalomania, and general churning anxiety that comprise the personal pathology of status. *A Man in Full* begins with Charlie Croker on his plantation on a sunny winter Saturday, breathing in "the resinous air of the pines." Before too many more breaths, his pleasure has yielded to a bolder satisfaction in reflecting that "every square inch of it, every beast that moved on it...was his, Cap'm Charlie Croker's." Ineluctably, Wolfe's characters skid toward the bottom line, converting love and beauty, art and nature, into assets in the ceaseless calculus of status. It amuses, it appalls.

But real life spread across the pages of a book?

The nineteenth-century realism Wolfe reveres was partly

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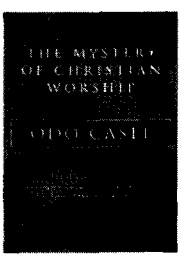

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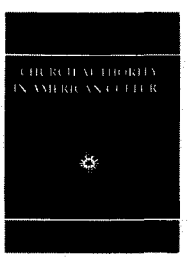

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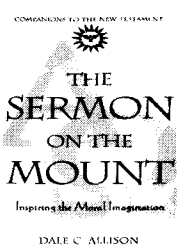

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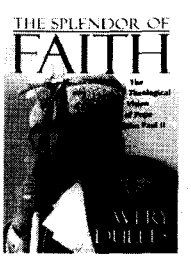

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a revolt against the insipid conventions of romance ("the old trade of make-believe," wrote William Dean Howells, "that pamper[s] our gross appetite for the marvelous"), and partly an attempt to keep pace with the successes of nineteenth-century materialism. Zola's influential 1880 essay, "The Experimental Novel," grounded literary naturalism in diagnosis, casting the writer as an observer of fixed laws of nature and society, rather than a mere poetic mystifier. Human nature was not some free-floating emanation, after all, but an interplay of instinct and environment. This new emphasis sought to bring literature in line with science, dispensing with ladies and lakes and noble Indians in the woods, and clearing the way for serious projects such as Zola's study of five generations of the Rougon-Macquart family. It was an intuition that the hazy fancifying of a Walter Scott or a Fenimore Cooper would not do in the age of Darwin and Marx.

Here Wolfe presents an odd mishmash. Brazenly *A Man in Full* flouts the realist pitch for things to occur in novels—the words are Henry James's—"as they occur in life, where the manner of a great many of them is not to occur at all." In Wolfe, *everything* occurs. (And the more marvelous, the better, including a character sprung from prison by a timely earthquake.) Yet beneath the razzle-dazzle surface lies a relentless naturalism, one that seizes the novel as a forum for illustrating certain theses on human nature and society. Though Wolfe cites Lewis, Balzac, and Zola, the deeper animating presences behind *A Man in Full* are not novelists at all, but scientists—Darwin and, above all, Thorstein Veblen.

That Veblen merits no mention in the *Harper's* essay suggests one of those influences too fundamental to disclose or even, perhaps, to see. Veblen extracted from the function of wealth in modern society a keen and durable insight: acquiring things is not, as was conventionally believed, about consuming them, but rather about showing them. Ownership was a "mark of prowess," he wrote; "visible success... an end sought for its own utility as a basis of esteem." And though Howells reviewed *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) as a biting satire of *fin de siècle* wealth, Veblen had something far broader in mind, an evolutionary interpretation of modern life. Social organization was—as ever—tribal and hierarchical, and his terms for it darkly atavistic: "the warrior and the hunter" prowling a "predatory culture" in which "any effort that does not involve an assertion of prowess comes to be unworthy of the man...." Wealth as an assertive show of force was the central drama of modern society.

It's no exaggeration to say that these ideas form a complete blueprint for *A Man in Full.* Wolfe's tone is merry where Veblen's was mordant, but his terms are identical. His novel pursues the predatory-culture argument tirelessly. We are shown Charlie Croker out hunting; relaxing in his Gun House, its walls festooned with shotguns and boars' heads; wrestling a rattlesnake before awed admirers. We observe hierarchy-display behavior, both dominant (Charlie, who "showed the room his omnipotent deltoids and *latissimi dorsi*, which bulged beneath his shirt") and submissive (Martha's milquetoast escort, dissolving when they run into Charlie—"a big submissive grin came over his face, and he began blurting out pleasantries"). And if we still don't get it, characters help out, like teachers at the blackboard, as when Peepgass's scheme sparks in Martha this rumination: "He now seemed...more of a man. He was no Charlie, but he had Charlie's passion for the deal, which was perhaps where the contemporary male's passion for battle went these days."

To my ear, this and many similar passages ("A quail shoot was a ritual in which the male of the species acted out his role of hunter, provider, and protector...") sound less like the calculated simplicities of a mega-bestseller than the stilted attempts of an evolutionary psychologist moonlighting as novelist. Life is status, and status is (male) power: Wolfe turns his novel into *Gray's Anatomy* to bring this idea home. "He was a mountain of flesh...." "His mighty neck swelled out until it seemed to merge with his trapezii in one continuous slope to the shoulders." "He rolled his massive shoulders, he flexed his neck up and down...." "His neck fanned out wider than his ears and merged with a pair of trapezius muscles that sloped like his native Balkar Dagh Mountains down to his shoulders." "His neck, trapezii, shoulders, and chest, as well as his upper arms, seemed to swell out to a prodigious size...." "He was so massive through the back and shoulders, the seat seemed incapable of containing him." "He was so big, his fingertips reached almost from one end of the couch to the other."

Writing like this has dispensed not merely with "what presses upon the heart of the individual," but with the individual himself — these sentences actually describe *seven different* characters in *A Man in Full* (and can you guess which is a horse?). It suggests that what attracted Wolfe to the idea of realism wasn't "the metropolis" or "the heart of the individual" but a literary determinism, born in nineteenth-century literature's science envy, which turns a novel into a shooting gallery for someone armed, as he is, with an all-encompassing thesis about what makes people tick. For while Wolfe—to borrow Isaiah Berlin's famous distinction—may look like the fox, sly and quick and knowing many things, secretly he's a hedgehog of a novelist, burrowing ever deeper into his One Big Idea. "He leaned forward with his huge forearms on the table and the testosterone flowing." "They sat with their thighs ajar in an athletic sprawl, as if they were bulging with so much testosterone they couldn't have closed their legs if they tried." *A Man in Full* is the production of an extravagant, radical materialism. Deeper and deeper Wolfe digs, implacably—almost desperately—reducing his characters: to the things they own and covet, the things they wear, and finally to the muscle and hormones that they are.

Two-thirds of the way through *Bonfire of the Vanities*, Wolfe inserted a revealing philosophical aside about an Amazon

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tribe who believe that "there is no such thing as a private self."

> The Bororos regard the mind as an open cavity...in which the entire village dwells and the jungle grows. In 1969 José M. R. Delgado, the eminent Spanish brain physiologist, pronounced the Bororos correct. For nearly three millennia, Western philosophers had viewed the self as something unique, something encased inside each person's skull, so to speak....At the core of one's self there was presumed to be something irreducible and inviolate. Not so, said Delgado. "Each person is a transitory composite of materials borrowed from the environment."... He cited experiments in which healthy college students lying on beds in well-lit but soundproofed chambers, wearing gloves to reduce the sense of touch and translucent goggles to block out specific sights, began to hallucinate within hours. Without the entire village, the whole jungle, occupying the cavity, they had no minds left.

What is the innermost life of the individual when the individual has, by definition, no inner life? As it turns out, the "empty" quality of *A Man in Full* is not, as Mailer argued, a sell-out, but a philosophical position. If we begin to get the stealthily dreary feeling that Wolfe's characters are not individuals but types, whose complexity lies largely in what they wear, buy, and covet, it's because Wolfe himself believes it. Believing it may make him a perfect writer for our time and place — the ultimate Material Boy for an America where invisible, databank-sifting marketers craft enticements tailored to your "personal" and "individual" desires. Who is this "you" they seem to know so well? He's a Tom Wolfe character.

Finally, it's tantalizing to consider that the mega-bestseller may issue not from cynical or mindless pandering, but rather the opposite, with its ideal author a covertly ideological one, in dedicated thrall to an idea. In Hollywood, the term for narratives pitchable in a single sentence and characters reducible to a single motivation is "high-concept." But doesn't that also describe Wolfe's fiction, this novelization of Veblen and Darwin, in which writing is a matter of "technique" driven by a theory, and characters who might develop interesting resistances to an author's intentions are nowhere to be found?

In this light Wolfe himself seems an evolutionary marvel. A closet ideologue with a lively voice and rollicking sense of humor—that's a killer adaptation in an environment where screenplays and film rights deliver maximum long-term push to your gene pool. In A *Man in Full* it makes for darkly manic comedy, but also a surprising heavy-handedness, and an underlying take on human possibility bleak enough that even a chuckling reader might leave the novel wishing for an author whose black bag held not just status yardstick but stethoscope, to take the pulse of characters forlornly crying, Where's the rest of me? □

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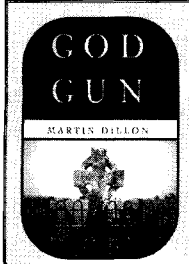

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARTIN DILLON worked for the BBC in Northern Ireland for eighteen years and has won international acclaim for his non-fiction books about Ireland. He has also written and produced documentaries, and been featured in news segments on CNN and ABC News.

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Celia Wren

OLDIES BUT...

'Nightingales' & 'Annie Get Your Gun'

It's because "nobody reads anymore," a man in the audience grumbled to his companion, moments before the start of *Not about Nightingales*, the long-lost play by Tennessee Williams. "Nobody—except for her."

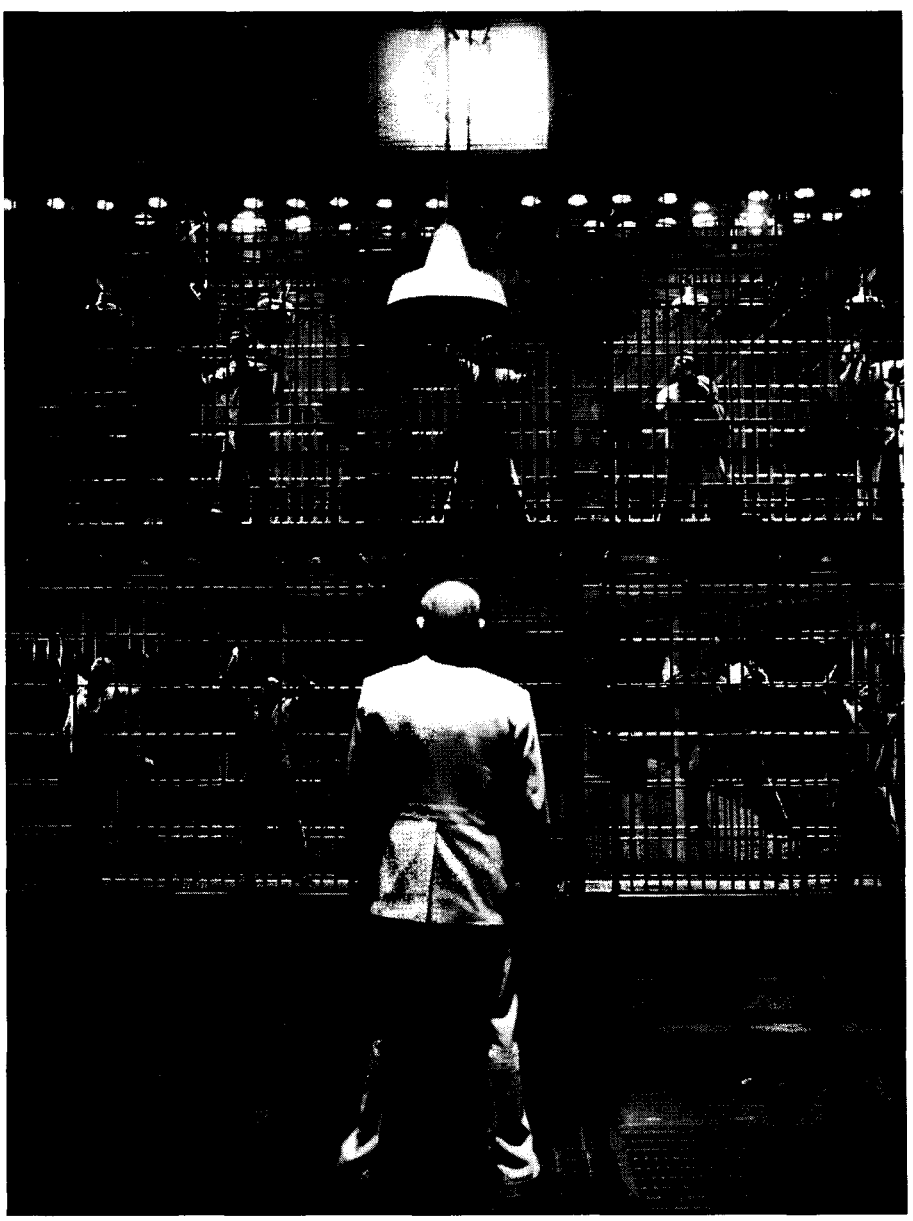
She, in this case, was Vanessa Redgrave—actress, sometime political activist, and the party responsible for rescuing *Nightingales* from a half century of oblivion. The twenty-seven-year-old Williams drafted the script in 1938, but put it aside when he could not find a theater to accept it. The drama languished in archival limbo for decades—an unlikely fate for a work by one of the century's most revered dramatists, perhaps, but then, no one reads.

A few years ago, after coming across a reference to the title in an obscure preface the playwright had written in the 1950s, Redgrave talked the estate's executor into digging up the manuscript. Last year *Nightingales* was finally staged for the first time in London; the production, directed by Trevor Nunn and starring Redgrave's brother Corin, has since traveled to Houston's Alley Theatre and to Broadway.

This media-friendly back-story suits the production, since *Nightingales* is about discovery and disclosure. Williams based the play on a real incident in which convicts who had gone on a hunger strike at a Philadelphia prison were locked in a cell with industrial-strength radiators and roasted to death. As the gruesome details came to light in late 1938, sparking a campaign for prison reform, Williams tooled the scandal into a riveting—if slightly clumsy—meditation on power, trust, and personal freedom.

"I like blowing things open," snaps the play's most fascinating character, Canary Jim (Finbar Lynch), a stoic but tightly wound convict who has kept his sanity by collaborating with authorities. For Jim, an explosion is a kind of revelation; a crisis in the jail will expose its carefully hidden, bureaucratized cruelty (a false health history is carefully filed on index cards whenever a convict dies) and destroy the loathsome, dissolute warden (Redgrave), who can coo at a toddler at one moment and dish out tortures the next. While waiting for the inevitable cataclysm, Jim torpedoes the illusions of the warden's naive new secretary (Sherri Parker Lee), who thinks the prison humane and modern. And, in a scene that strains a little too hard for meaning, Jim takes aim at romantic idealism in general, ripping Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" out of a poetry book in disgust, with the remark that, were he to take up writing, his texts would be "not about nightingales."

Such lines bolster the bleakness of the play's vision, as does Richard Hoover's brilliantly realized set—an expanse of grid and platform that connects two-tiered barred cells, in the rear, to an all-



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gray office (even the U.S. flag is gray-on-gray) that juts out into the audience. (Hoover also designed jails for the films *Last Dance* and *Dead Man Walking*.) On the one hand, the unrelieved pessimism rachets up the suspense to near-thriller levels. From its earliest scenes, *Nightingales* seems to be holding in reserve a destructive energy that grows more threatening with each expertly acted moment—the leering Redgrave toying with a length of rubber hosepipe (the warden's favorite weapon), or the fiercely intense Lynch, who reveals Jim's frayed nerves with a single shaking hand or foot.

On the other hand, director Nunn clearly intends to keep the audience from experiencing the production as pure entertainment. The staging brings viewers uncomfortably close to the action, positioning them on three sides of the thrust stage, so that they look at each other, as well as at the performers. Actors make entrances and exits through the rows of seats, too, so that it is impossible to feel distanced from the shambling warden, or the prisoners marching in lock step. The message is obvious—we are all implicated in the brutalities we are witnessing.

This deliberately inspired collective guilt yields a slight thrill of self-congratulation, too—our willingness to be implicated in a prison tragedy, during a night at the theater, feels like evidence of a finely honed social conscience. In fact, it is hard to see *Nightingales* without feeling just a little bit smug. The facts surrounding the play's rediscovery and popular success seem to testify to our sophisticated cultural palate. We may not read as much as we should, these days, but at least we know how to appreciate a great playwright.

When rummaging around in the past, it seems, we take the opportunity to confirm what we like about ourselves. The current revival of *Annie Get Your Gun*, for example, has allowed us to measure our progress on the sensitivity front. Though blessed with a knockout score ("There's No Business like Show Business" is only one of the delightful numbers), the original Irving Berlin classic, based on the story of sharpshooter Annie Oakley, was ill-suited to modern audiences because it disparaged Native Americans. In order to make the show more palatable, therefore, the creators of the current version sensibly recruited writer Peter Stone (*Titanic*, *1776*) to overhaul Herbert and Dorothy Fields's 1946 book.

Some of the new material makes stereotypes turn witty somersaults. "How..." intones Chief Sitting Bull (Gregory Zaragoza) on his first entrance, only to have a group of vaudeville impresarios obligingly chirp "How!" right back. "...Are you?" finishes the deadpan chief, who becomes Annie's mentor and best friend. Elsewhere the bid for political correctness is more direct—a subplot about a star-crossed interracial romance, for example, feels a little overdeliberate.

A certain self-consciousness, in short, keeps the new *Annie* from being as effervescent as it might be, considering that it stars crowd-pleaser Bernadette Peters as the spunky, pistol-packing heroine. While editing out the racial slurs, Stone gave the musical a new framing narrative—Annie's rocky love affair with rival marksman Frank Butler (Tom Wopat) is now a play-within-a-play, unveiled as part of "Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show." Director Graciela Daniele exploits this conceit by having characters man spotlights and curtain ropes while the Wild West Show's circular set spins around on the stage like a lazy Susan.

The metatheatrical layering seems to invigorate the choreography (by Daniele and Jeff Calhoun), which revels in whimsical, referential movements—cowboy-style horseriding stances, flourishes with imaginary guns, and so on. But in general, the emphatic appeal to modern awareness gets in the way of the show's exuberance, even when Peters is hamming it up, swinging upside down from a trapeze, or miming a kazoo with her hands. A little tinkering has made *Annie Get Your Gun* into a flattering mirror, reminding us of our refined theatrical tastes and enlightened sensibility. But a mirror is not a soothing thing to watch. □

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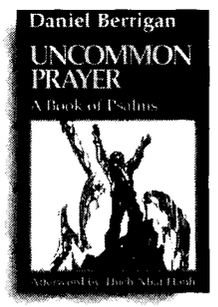

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Pilgrimage to the edge of the world

The Leper's Companions
Julia Blackburn
Pantheon, $22, 197 pp.

Valerie Sayers

Julia Blackburn's odd, compelling little novel opens in the present. Its protagonist is a woman who has "lost someone she loved. It does not matter who that person was or what sort of love it had been. The fact was that he had gone and she remained." In her sorrow and longing, the woman slips from her contemporary world into a seaside village in the year 1410.

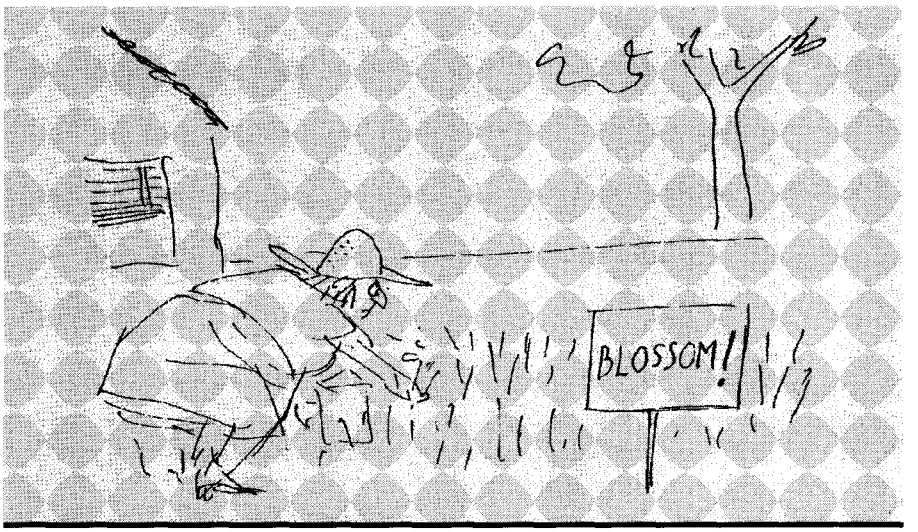
The story's plot makes it sound like fantasy, but it doesn't much resemble other works of that genre. *The Leper's Companions* is a tightly compressed novel with precise and poetic language. As the grieving woman moves from the present to the distant past, she takes on the form of a first-person narrator and enters the story as a kind of floating observer. She has left her world of contemporary reality to seek out those who, unburdened by the rationalism of the modern age, understand viscerally the dreadful power of death, disease, and madness.

In the first half of the novel, which spans a year, she comes to know the villagers and their own sorrows and partings. The pregnant Sally loses her fisherman husband to the sea when he goes seeking a mermaid; the shoemaker, who is gradually going blind, has the scales fall from his eyes, only to descend into madness; an old lady who has never had a chance to slow down climbs into bed and orders her long-gone friends and relations to parade before her; a leper asks the priest to perform the Burial of the Dead over his living body. The narrator believes what the villagers believe: that dragons and mermaids exist and that saints will intercede for us. Lice, fleas, and rats dart through the landscape, the narrator noting them casually. Hunger hovers along the periphery of everyone's vision. In the face of all its catastrophes, the novel's tone is so matter-of-fact that, more often than not, it resembles a fairy tale. It is not a fairy tale, however; nor is it simply magical realism; nor is it fully allegory. The novel's religious motifs and historical framework—the sorrowful woman has entered a world about to experience its renaissance—free it from neat classification.

The narrator herself is full of subtle tricks. She comments on the action, appears in it, disappears. She moves the historical passages from past to present tense and back again. The physical world of the late Middle Ages is described in elegant and exact, often terrifying prose, but our narrator is just as focused on the villagers' emotions as she is on their bodily reality. They do not hold back those emotions: In the face of their own losses, they grieve and they punish and they fear fully, externally. When devils plague them, they cast the devils out. When the objects of their longing disappear into the sea, they plunge in after. This world always links the physical and the metaphysical: The pleasures one of the characters takes "from the sexual act was quieter and yet more profound, it was like dying, but without the fear." The priest describes death as a "going out of prison and an ending of exile."

The narrator focuses eventually on four characters: Sally, the woman whose husband has disappeared chasing a mermaid; the shoemaker's widow, who has shepherded her husband through blindness and madness and death with unwavering love; the priest of the village, the man of learning, a fearful soul who goes to great lengths to calm the villagers' fears; and a leper who has been healed. The four set off with the narrator (perhaps they can see and hear her, perhaps they cannot) on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem which makes up the second half, and the second year, of the story.

A reader searching for tidy allegory



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might best search in this pilgrimage half of the book, where the variations on dealing with loss are played to their final notes. On the sea journey, Sally leaps into the sea as her husband has done. We learn that the leper may have killed his lover, and that it was in trying to escape his loss that he first became afflicted, his sadness devouring his flesh. (His health has been restored through the ministrations of a kind old couple.) The shoemaker's widow—she who grieves with such grace, by crying loudly and then putting her sorrow aside—finds her dead husband in a shoemaker's shop in the town of Ram, before she ever reaches the Holy City.

After the narrative build of the journey, the time the last two pilgrims spend in Jerusalem flashes too quickly by (and the reader is reminded, if reminder is needed, that this is not a religious novel: Christian symbolism takes no more weight than the magical symbolism that has been scattered through the rest of the novel). Locked with the leper in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the priest eats eggs and bread, a good allegorical meal, by candlelight. When he goes off to wrestle with the Jordan River, he loses the leper; the priest will return to the seaside village alone. The leper meanwhile has gone off to join the Monastery of Saint Catherine in the desert of Mount Sinai, and the narrator accompanies him until he steps back in a rock cleft at the same moment she steps forward. "I knew then," she says, "that I had reached the edge of the world that the leper had allowed me to share with him."

The pilgrimage, then—that journey to the world where one must give up reason to find faith—has healed our sad traveler and allowed her back into the world of the present. Like her earlier novel, *The Book of Color*, Blackburn's new book is quite startling in the beginning; but as a reader becomes accustomed to the world it creates, it feels familiar and inevitable. It is a generous novel with its own healing powers. □

Valerie Sayers *is professor of English at the University of Notre Dame and the author of five novels.*

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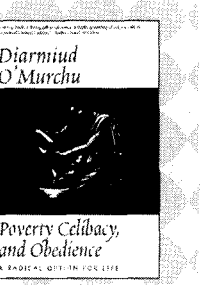

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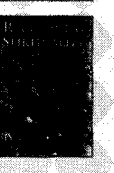

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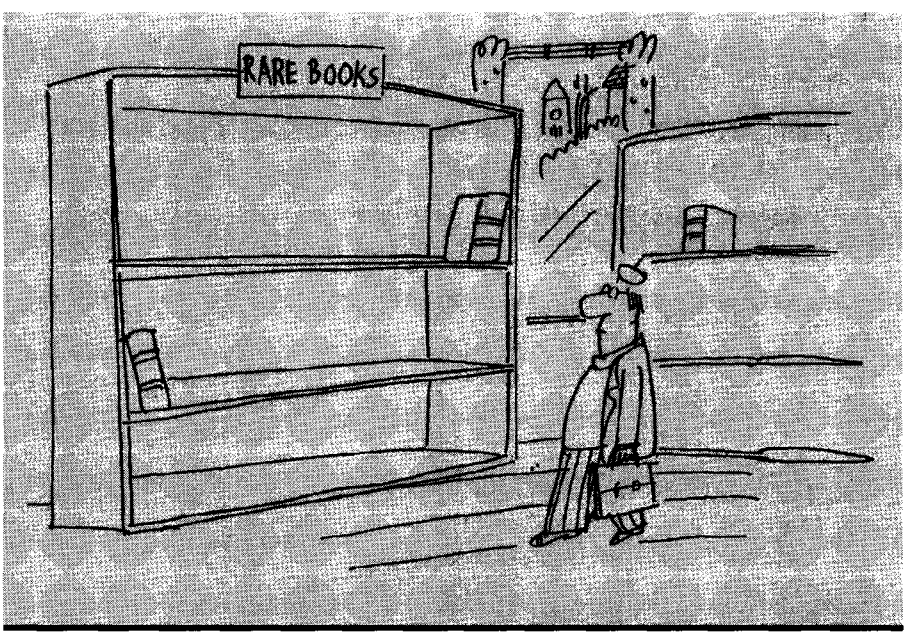
IN MINIATURE

Saint Augustine
Garry Wills
Lipper/Viking, $19.95, 152 pp.

Glenn Tinder

The main source of dissatisfaction for most readers of Garry Wills's new book on Saint Augustine is apt to be that there is not more of it. Rather than a many-colored portrait in oils, Wills offers a small etching—done with great care and skill. Almost everyone, even those already well-versed in Augustine, will learn from examining the etching; to say that they are apt to wish it were larger is a way of praising it. There is, however, a danger attached to a short account of so many-sided a figure as Augustine. Readers may fail to appreciate how large a personage Augustine is in the history of the Western mind and of Western institutions.

Within the limits set by his project (his book is one of the Penguin Lives series), Wills deals with Augustine in a fresh and original way. The man he shows us is not exactly the same as the man with whom many of us are familiar. He is not, for example, someone who came to Christianity from a wild and licentious youth, despite the title of his best-known work—the *Confessions*; rather, he lived from late adolescence until past the age of thirty, and as sanctioned by the customs of his era, with one concubine. Contrary to a tenacious myth, it is unlikely that his mother played a crucial role in his conversion to Christianity. His relations with other people were characterized by a gentleness which is often not recognized. He was, for example, heavily dependent in his thinking on the presence and responses of other minds, so that his intellectual posture was to a marked degree dialogical rather than simply dogmatic; as a bishop, he was a balanced, judicious, and kindly administrator; and his initial attitude toward the Donatists was pacific and dialogical (as exemplified by his desire for public discussions), and even after his attitude had hardened, he pleaded for mercy in the case of Donatists arrested for the murder of one of his priests. Finally, he appeared less towering in the late Roman world than he does from the perspective of the twentieth century. He lived in one of the provinces, far from Rome; he neither spoke nor easily read Greek, the established intellectual tongue of the times; and as a bishop, he was only one of almost seven hundred African bishops.



Not that Wills's Augustine will be a stranger to those who know him. But he will bear details they may not hitherto have noted. Exemplifying the unfamiliar nuances in Wills's portrait is the suggestion that Augustine's spiritual landscape was framed by mountains, seen daily from his earliest years, and symbolizing "God's stability" and "skyward reach," and by the sea, "an image of death," known to Augustine from two crossings of the Mediterranean. Illustrative of Wills's discriminating treatment of more intellectual matters is his argument that Augustine's early and longstanding reluctance to employ force against the Donatists had little to do with such principles as tolerance, freedom of inquiry, or separation of church and state, these not belonging to the language of his times. Rather, it expressed an overriding respect for truth: People should not be induced to lie about their beliefs. And underlying his ultimate abandonment of such "tolerance" was Augustine's growing emphasis on will, rather than intellect; faith became a matter not entirely separate from choice.

Still, the narrow boundaries within which Wills works pose a problem. Augustine was a personality and mind of great complexity. Not only was he far-ranging in his main concerns. He appears sometimes to be self-contradictory, as in his predisposition toward both dialogue and dogma, and in his fusion in one theology of both Plotinus and Paul. Moreover, as a Christian living in the twilight of antiquity, he cannot be characterized simply as an inhabitant of the ancient world. He foreshadows not only the Middle Ages but the modern world as well; this is shown in R. A. Markus's splendid *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Saint Augustine*, where Augustine takes on some of the features of a twentieth-century liberal. So multifaceted a mind can hardly be encompassed by an etching, although Wills probably comes as near

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to such an achievement as anyone could. Thus Wills mentions Augustine's "most characteristic themes—time, memory, the inner dynamic of the self, the inner dynamic of God, the continual activity of God in the soul, first by ongoing creation and then by regeneration in grace." Although Wills notes that it took a great thinker to develop such themes, he does not explain the revolution in Western consciousness which these themes effected.

Broadly, the Augustine we do not clearly see in Wills's etching is the disputatious, unyielding, and profoundly creative church father whose career marks a turning point in Western history. There is practically nothing, for example, on Augustine's war with Pelagius and the development of the concept of Original Sin. It is no exaggeration to say of this concept that it forms the dividing line between two different ways of viewing the human situation and the scope of human possibilities in the world. At the heart of Marxism, for example, lies a tacit rejection of Augustinian psychology. Humans might, Marx assumed, become largely sinless. On the other hand, undergirding all serious alternatives to Marxism, whether those found in religious sources, like papal encyclicals and the writings of Reinhold Niebuhr, or in the works of secular realists, such as Albert Camus, is the assumption that human nature, apart from grace, is irremediably distorted. Human historical prospects are seen as limited, even if not entirely bleak. This is because of a premise grounded historically and theologically in the doctrine of Original Sin—that undiluted and unopposed righteousness will never reign on earth.

Such a premise clearly has political implications of first importance. Hope must be, if not severely confined, then eschatological. And human efforts in history must be sustained either by lives of heroic futility, as symbolized in the myth of Sisyphus (so prized by Camus), or else by an apocalyptic sense of history. Augustine, of course, embraced the latter alternative. The consequence of his doing so was a transformation of the political attitudes inherited from antiquity. No longer was there much concern for the satisfactions offered by civic activity and a common life, as in the Greek *polis*, or for the glories of global human harmony intimated by the Roman Empire. Only the City of God was worthy of unconditional allegiance. The fall of the Roman Empire—as fearful an event as the human race has ever witnessed—was not, for Augustine, the sort of thing that belonged among our ultimate concerns. Few people today are capable of occupying steadily the eschatological vantage point which enabled Augustine to maintain such political equanimity. Yet awareness that the importance of happenings in the political universe is at most penultimate, and that political agencies like the state rarely reach into the final depths of existence, is firmly seated in our minds and is closely related to those modern ideals, such as privacy and the rule of law, which set the realms of the intimate and personal apart from the realms of the common and political. We are all more Augustinian than we realize.

PHILEMON'S PROBLEM

A Theology of Grace

James Tunstead Burtchaell

PHILEMON was a wealthy Christian whose slave Onesimus went off in search of freedom, met and listened to Paul, and joined the church. But instead of being given a new life of his own, Onesimus was sent back to an aggrieved master with no protection but Paul's brief Letter to Philemon. Paul never asked Philemon to free his slave. Instead, he admonished him to take Onesimus back — only now as his brother in Christ. This left both master and bondsman with a staggering problem: how could one man own another and both be brothers in Christ?

In this unique work James Tunstead Burtchaell uses the ancient story of Philemon and Onesimus as a compelling entry into modern theological reflection on the unbelievable reach of the grace and forgiveness of the Father whose Son died without disciples, rose to reconcile and transform them, and then scattered them around the world as men and women who were now also able to love those who loved them not — and transform them too.

First published twenty-five years ago and now extensively rewritten, *Philemon's Problem* tracks across the spectrum of Christian thought — from doctrine to ethics to worship. Burtchaell's provocative theology of grace demonstrates the profound insight that the Father of Jesus is not an aggrieved god in need of sacrificial appeasement but a God we are unable to alienate. Burtchaell also argues that the church's mission today, just as it was in Philemon's day, is not to offer a privileged avenue into God's favor, but to offer the privileged insight that God can have no attitude but favor.

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It is integral to Augustine's greatness, however, that he could argue that political and many other earthly affairs had only secondary importance without arguing that they had no importance at all. The latter extreme was closed to him as a Christian who believed not only that God was creator of the universe, and had placed in every existing thing traces of his glory, but also that God was sovereign over history and that everything occurring in history therefore had meaning. Augustine philosophized under constraints. He could not utterly despise any created reality or any historical occurrence. The upshot was a view of history that has become one of the main structural features of the Western intellect. This view was only vaguely defined by Augustine, but it contained at least two vital tenets: that the history of the human race constitutes a single story, not just a miscellaneous collection of stories; and that this history has an end and purpose. Apart from these principles, so commonplace a concept as the Enlightenment's doctrine of progress could never have come into being.

One hears very little of such matters from Wills. To say this, however, is less to criticize Wills, given the boundaries of his study, than to note the manifold character of the man whom he sets before us. It is to remind ourselves of a writer who wrote more, as has often been noted, than probably any one person has ever read; whose inner tensions and variations almost defy balanced treatment; whose stubbornness and anger and self-assurance can be exasperating and even repellent; and whose influence, to be adequately appraised, demands a survey of all subsequent history. One way to indicate Augustine's stature in a few words is to say that he forces us to look back at him, and to take his measure, again and again. For those facing this recurrent task, Wills offers a bright, if fleeting, moment of illumination. □

Glenn Tinder, *the author of* The Political Meaning of Christianity *(1989), is professor of political science emeritus, University of Massachusetts at Boston.*

AN ENDEARING CITIZEN

The Secret Lives of Citizens
Pursuing the Promise of American Life
Thomas Geoghegan
Pantheon Books, $25, 240 pp.

Chris Appy

Imagine yourself a twenty-two-year-old Harvard graduate. It's 1972, and you are a staff writer for the *New Republic*. Choose a topic to write about—anything. Your classmates might pick the McGovern presidential campaign, or the environment, or court-ordered racial busing, or the women's movement, or the final, dreadful, throes of the American war in Vietnam. But if you're Thomas Geoghegan, you have bigger fish to fry. For you, the most significant, cataclysmic phenomenon of the age is: the Rise of State Government!

Even the managing editor has his doubts. Maybe Geoghegan should find a new subject.

"You know the break-in over at Watergate?" the editor asked. "Why not drop all your other duties here, and simply follow *that*! Just that one story, just follow it, see where it goes."

Geoghegan gasped. "You really...you really think, this break-in...is more important than revenue sharing?"

The Secret Lives of Citizens, a memoir *cum* political treatise *cum* urban exposé, is full of this kind of charming self-deprecation. A labor lawyer and exemplary citizen, Geoghegan can be very funny, especially at his own expense. A policy wonk, we're invited to laugh, passing up a chance to beat out Woodward and Bernstein for the Watergate scoop! But the breezy style and mock heroic wit are a bit deceiving and sometimes annoying, like Dave Barry filling in for Mike Royko. Is this a put-on, or what? If you read on, though, and it is almost impossible not to, you begin to realize that Geoghegan has serious, even passionate, convictions.

That business about revenue sharing was not just a joke. The redistribution of federal power and money to the states began with Kennedy, accelerated with Nixon's "New Federalism," and was pursued with a vengeance under Reagan. The result, according to Geoghegan, is nothing less than the collapse of central government—one of the most profound and disastrous institutional transformations of the late-twentieth century. In 1950, for example, one of every two government employees worked for the federal government. Now it is down to one out of six.

But what's so great about central government? Hasn't it produced more than its share of militarism, inequality, and Republican rule? Perhaps, in practice, Geoghegan might concede. But only federal power has the *potential* to support broad-based progressive reform—to raise wages, to ensure the right of labor to organize, to extend "the promise of American life" articulated by Geoghegan's heroes of the Progressive era and the New Deal.

The reason Washington has not fulfilled this potential boils down to a fundamental flaw in democratic representation: the Senate. Geoghegan makes a surprisingly persuasive case for abolishing it. All those virtually empty, conservative states with two votes. No wonder there is gridlock. Did the founders really intend to create all those rotten boroughs? Forty senators represent only 10 percent of the population, but can stop any legislation with a filibuster. "That is, 90 percent of the population base as represented in the Senate could vote yes, and the bill would still lose." So much for one person, one vote.

But didn't the House of Representatives produce Newt Gingrich? True, but that is because democracy and voter participation have been so effectively de-

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uphill as fast as it can
like in a nightmare
but at the doorway
you will hesitate turning the knob
pushing the door open
stepping to the bedside
bending to touch the sheet
lifting her in your arms
the way you lift your daughter
when she is sleeping
who one day too will bend over you
scraping the earth
wanting to crawl back in

Joan I. Siegel

graded by the intransigence of the Senate. Anyway, let's not get too bogged down in national politics. After all, though Geoghegan still fantasizes about a heroic return to the "commanding heights" of central power, he virtually gave up on it by 1979. "In our times *Washington means nothing. It can't raise* wages, or get health care, or stop the rise of poverty." The only people who get to use federal power are antigovernment types like Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve.

But Geoghegan is not one to moan on the sidelines and wait for progressive elites to dispense democracy. If you read his remarkable first book (*Which Side Are You On: Trying to Be for Labor When It's Flat on Its Back*, Plume, 1991), you know that he has spent twenty-five years crusading for perhaps the most forgotten of all grassroots causes, American labor. There Geoghegan chronicled his legal efforts to stem the tide of this second most profound and disastrous institutional change of the late-twentieth century—the collapse of organized labor.

While the first book focused on Geoghegan's day job, this volume is really about his moonlighting as a citizen of a great American city. When he left Washington in 1979, he resolved to settle in "a big disheveled city, Catholic and alcoholic." On to Chicago! Here, surely, one could have a meaningful civic life. *Chicago had wards, aldermen, political* machines, Haymarket Square, unions, immigrants, Nelson Algren, Saul Alinsky—our political city! Though Geoghegan never entirely lost his initial enthusiasm for Chicago, what he found was bleak and depressing—a city of deep class and racial divisions with yuppie neighborhoods around the Loop, full of health clubs and *trattorias*, and largely abandoned neighborhoods of the poor, "a city of dead children." Political power had gone south to Springfield, the capital, and out to the suburbs of DuPage County.

How, then, to be a citizen? After toying with the idea of running for state rep (always hunting for the center of power), Geoghegan immersed himself in an extraordinary round of volunteer service. He worked for Mayor Harold Washington (1983-87), took on legal suits against child labor, used long neglected public-health laws to fight the rise of TB, coached teen-agers for job interviews, worked with several gun-control organizations, and more.

We get to go along, riding shotgun in city ambulances and touring neighborhoods with dozens of Geoghegan's anonymous friends ("L," "M," "B," "Father C," "Carl W"—are they *all* in witness protection programs?). If you sign up for the tour, be forewarned. There will be lots of sardonic asides to lighten the mood, but you won't be spending much time sipping cappuccino. The standard package includes a midnight trip to convenience stores to talk with sixteen-year-old workers. Then its off to the Narcotics Night Court ("It's like a plantation"), followed by an early morning drive—its too big to walk—around the city jail ("this is what I now took out-of-town friends to see instead of steel mills"). If you're lucky, and stay long enough, Geoghegan might drive you out to West Chicago for a leisurely dinner at a Polish restaurant where you'll get an instructive quiz on Chicago demography (Latinos are one-quarter of the population, but Poles have been emigrating in higher numbers).

This is a fascinating book. By now just about everybody has written a memoir, *but only a rare few move beyond the self*-absorption of our age to connect private life to a new and compelling public understanding. And *The Secret Lives of Citizens* is also oddly moving. Somehow the combination of wry humor, gloomy assessment, insatiable curiosity, and romantic idealism serves to inspire. Few of us can live up to Geoghegan's standard of citizenship. And he is, in his modesty, perhaps too willing to let us off the hook ("If I had a kid, I'd immediately leave the city. It's not even an issue.") But the example of this decent and endearing citizen may well give us the nerve to do something more, however small, to extend the promise of American life. □

Chris Appy *is the author of* Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam *(University of North Carolina Press, 1993).*

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BEYOND THE BUBBLES

Devil Take the Hindmost
A History of Financial Speculation
Edward Chancellor
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, $25, 370 pp.

Charles R. Morris

Earlier this spring, the stock of a new company called Priceline.com opened its first day of trading at $16 a share and quickly shot up to $85 before settling down to close out the day at $69. Multiplying the share price by the total number of shares outstanding produced a market value just shy of $10 billion, a remarkable sum considering that Priceline's previous year's revenues were only about $30 million, while its losses exceeded $100 million.

The current craze for Internet stocks has all the earmarks of the speculative bubbles that are the subject of *Devil Take the Hindmost*, although Edward Chancellor concedes that it is often difficult to tell the difference between "speculation" (bad) and "investment" (good). As one wag put it, it's like explaining the difference between passion and love to a teen-ager. "He perceives that they are different, but they don't seem quite different enough to clear up his problem."

Bubbles happen because a lot of people make a lot of money before they pop. Anyone who invested in companies like Yahoo! or America Online a few years ago would have seen her money multiply many times over, as did the folks who put up the early money for Priceline. Investors know that only a handful of the hundreds of internet companies will come out on top, but, who knows, maybe theirs will be one. A second characteristic is that the huge gains racked up by the professionals draw in legions of amateur plungers, who are usually the ones left holding the bag.

Chancellor is an English journalist and historian who once did a stint at the investment bank Lazard Frères. His book is squarely in the tradition of Matthew Josephson's *The Robber Barons*, a colorful and well-written romp through the excesses, the peculations, and the moral outrages perpetrated by princes of high finance throughout the ages.

The first half of the book is mostly an updating of Charles Mackay's famous *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, first published in 1841. There are some terrific stories here—the Dutch tulip mania of the early seventeenth century, John Law's Mississippi scheme that set Paris agog a century later, and London's South Sea Bubble, a Ponzi scheme promoted by British entrepreneurs envious of Law. Along the way, there are characters like His Highness, Gregor, the Cacique of Poynais, actually a Scotsman named Gregor McGregor who made a killing in 1821 selling Londoners the bonds of a make-believe country.

Like many of the more egregious bubbles, the South Sea scheme could operate only with the explicit cooperation of highly placed government officials. The company, which was nominally incorporated to develop South Sea trade, issued shares carrying a 5 percent dividend, with the proceeds devoted to buying out the British national debt. Since British bonds paid less than the shares, the scheme turned on selling the shares at a substantial premium over the value of the bonds, which was justified by pointing to the lucrative profits to be earned from the South Seas.

Ironically, the scheme might actually have worked if the promoters had not so tirelessly "bulled" their stock. But when South Sea share prices shot to more than fifteen times that of the bonds, the absurdity of the entire proposition was too patent even for a thoroughly bribed Parliament to ignore. And like bubblegum, when it popped, it left a sticky mess all over London. Isaac Newton could do the math, and he sold off his £7,000 investment early in the game, but could not resist getting back in when prices kept rising, eventually taking a hit of more than £20,000.

Reading Chancellor's book, however, gives the impression that gulling the unwary is what finance is all about. In fact, the fifteen or so episodes that fill out his book—from tulips through Michael Milken and the recent property bubble in Japan—account for most of the sensational material available for a book like this, which is not much to show for three hundred years of financial markets.

At the end of his account of the 1840s British railroad stock craze, for instance, Chancellor rather grudgingly concedes that beneath all the hoopla, the railroad promoters laid down some 8,000 miles of track and put a million men to work. The railroad "craze" was actually a key element in Great Britain's rise to industrial dominance. Similarly, while Jay

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Gould mercilessly fleeced his British investors, he also mediated the flow of billions of dollars into America and laid down the basic railroad system that still prevails today.

Chancellor's primary argument is that financial bubbles cause economic depressions, although his own history shows that that's usually not the case. His black picture of the market crashes of the 1870s fails to mention that they coincided with the fastest economic growth in the nation's history. He tries hard to demonstrate that the 1929 crash caused the Great Depression, although it was almost certainly a relatively minor event in a worldwide crisis, and he seems puzzled that the crash of 1987 didn't lead to a similar crisis. He dwells on the junk bond crash of 1989, omitting that over the past fifteen years or so, they have been among the best performing of all financial instruments. His snide comments on the mortgage-backed market ignore the fact that the packaging of mortgages on Wall Street saves homeowners billions in interest costs each year.

The internet bubble is only the visible froth on a profound technological revolution, one that has already vastly increased business efficiency. If it had been left to the established telephone companies, it would never have happened. It mostly still hasn't in countries without the freewheeling venture capital and stock markets that exist in America. By assembling little puddles of savings into great pools of capital, finance is the dynamo of an industrial economy. Chancellor's book is colorful and fun, but readers should be aware that he has left out most of the story. □

Charles R. Morris's *recent books include* Computer Wars *(1993),* American Catholic *(1997), and* Money, Greed, and Risk *(forthcoming), all from Times Books/Random House.*

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THE EUCHARIST AS PUZZLE

The Eucharist in the West
History and Theology
Edward J. Kilmartin, S.J.
Pueblo Book, The Liturgical Press, $49.95, 422 pp.

Jaroslav Pelikan

My favorite illustration of the different ways and different rates of the development of various Christian doctrines has always been the contrast between the Western doctrine of baptism and the Western doctrine of the Eucharist, which, at a first superficial glance, one would expect to have developed together as part of the general doctrine of the sacraments. Enumerating the gifts conferred by baptism, the "father of Latin theology," the North African Tertullian (c. 160-c. 225), attributed to it four effects: remission of sins, deliverance from death, regeneration, and the bestowal of the Holy Spirit. As an editor and translator of Tertullian, Ernest Evans, has observed, "by the end of the second century, if not fifty years earlier, the doctrine of baptism (even without the aid of controversy to give it precision) was so fully developed that subsequent ages down to our own have found nothing significant to add to it." Therefore Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and John Wesley were all agreed on it.

By contrast, the first full-scale discussion of the doctrine of the Eucharist in the Catholic West did not come until the ninth century, after it had been celebrated millions of times for more than eight hundred years—longer than the time that separates us from Thomas Aquinas—when two Benedictine monks at Corbie, Radbertus and Ratramnus (whose names are similar enough to generate endless confusion), exchanged treatises on the question of whether the Body of Christ that was on the altar was identical with the Body of Christ that was born of the Virgin Mary. And despite having had the benefit, in every century from then until now, of at least an ample measure of what Evans calls "the aid of controversy to give it precision," the development of the Western teaching on the Real Presence has defied settlement. Two of the most important and influential of all the Western so-called "ecumenical councils," the Fourth Lateran Council under Pope Innocent III in 1215 and the Council of Trent at its thirteenth session in 1551, attempted to achieve closure by giving "transubstantiation" an official standing in their decrees, but neither of them managed to still the controversy, even within Roman Catholicism, not to say within Protestantism. And it is still going on.

Eastern theology, in its contacts and controversies with the West, was obliged to address the Western questions, and eventually even coined the Greek word *metousiōsis* as a technical term literally translating "transubstantiation," a term that eventually found its way into more than one of the seventeenth-century Eastern Orthodox Confessions. The primary locus of Orthodox eucharistic teaching was and is the Divine Liturgy, in which, by contrast with the Latin West, it is the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the Epiclesis, not the words of Institution by themselves, that is seen as bringing about the eucharistic miracle: "O Lord, who didst send down Thy Most Holy Spirit upon Thine Apostles at the third hour: Take Him not from us, O Good One, but renew Him in us who pray to Thee, and make this Bread the precious Body of Thy Christ, and that which is in this Cup, the precious Blood of Thy Christ, making the change by Thy Holy Spirit." That Eastern emphasis was repeatedly and vigorously disputed by the West, but in the revision of the liturgy

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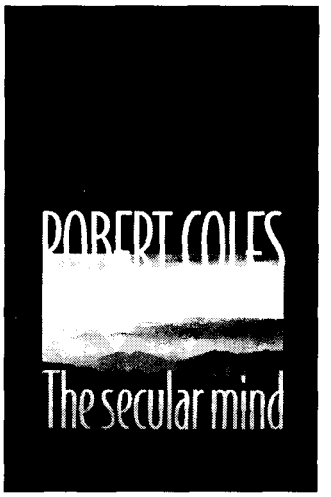
after the Vatican II there has been significant movement in the direction of a "double Epiclesis," praying that the Holy Spirit may come upon the congregation and upon the elements of the Sacrament.

All of that is the historical—and the ecumenical—context (and content) of this quite remarkable book by the late Jesuit theologian, Edward J. Kilmartin (who died on June 16, 1994), previously known chiefly for his *Christian Liturgy: Theology and Practice, Part I, Systematic Theology of Liturgy*, which was published in 1988. At Father Kilmartin's death the book was left unfinished (a sign of the times: not in manuscript, but on his laptop); and the arduous but also extremely delicate task of putting it into publishable condition was carried out by his Jesuit confrere, Robert J. Daly—always a delicate task, as I too have had reason to know, because the editor is torn between the conflicting duties of making the manuscript presentable and of not doing violence to the author's intentions. On the whole, the editor has succeeded in that task, although at times he does seem to have gone rather far in the direction of reconstructing what his colleague might have written rather than merely refurbishing what he actually has written. As the readers of *Christian Liturgy* are well aware, Kilmartin was a better theologian than he was a stylist, and in places this book is rather heavy going.

But it is worth the effort. For by applying to the Thomistic and Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist the fifth-century principle of Saint Prosper of Aquitaine that the rule of prayer (*lex orandi*) establishes the rule of faith (*lex credendi*), this book succeeds above all in restoring the doctrine of the Trinity to its central and normative position also for sacramental teaching. The two twentieth-century Roman Catholic eucharistic theologians with whom Kilmartin engages most directly are the Benedictines Anscar Vonier and Odo Casel, but he goes beyond both Vonier's interpretation of "sacrifice" and Casel's interpretation of "mystery" to make the case for seeing the Real Presence as the doctrine, but transubstan-



The Secular Mind

Robert Coles

Noted child psychiatrist and best-selling author Robert Coles offers a profound meditation on how secular culture has settled into the hearts and minds of Americans. Interwoven into the story is Coles's personal quest for understanding how the sense of the sacred has stood firm in the lives of individuals, even as they have struggled with doubt.

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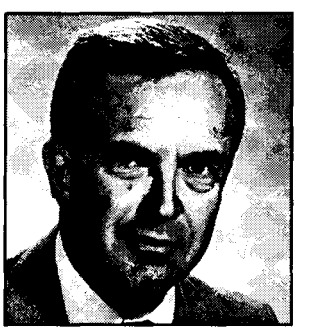

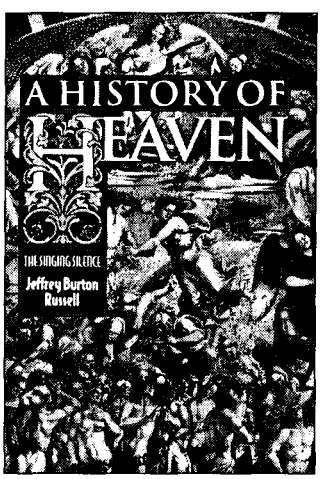

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tiation as one way of formulating the doctrine. After all, even the Council of Trent spoke of transubstantiation not so much as a dogma in itself as rather a "convenient and appropriate" term for the dogma.

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Jaroslav Pelikan *is Sterling Professor Emeritus of History at Yale. Among his many books are* Mary through the Centuries *(1996) and his five-volume* The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine.

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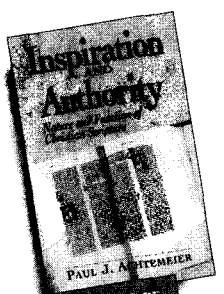

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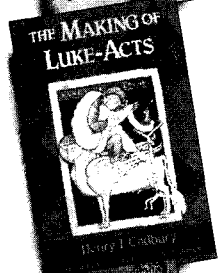

THE MAKING OF LUKE-ACTS
With a new introduction by Paul Anderson
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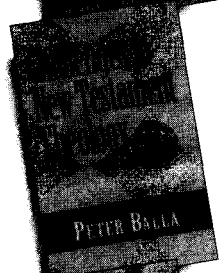

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 4)

"precarious." It seems not to be, thanks to the courage of leaders like Costas Simitis in Greece, but more to continent-wide revulsion, shared far beyond Europe, at the treatment of Kosovars.

I apologize for all the criticism; your editorial comes to a conclusion about this military action that I agree with wholeheartedly. But there's one more conclusion this observer of *Mitteleuropa* wants to share, and I didn't always feel this way. Kosovo should be allowed to join Albania.

This is not quite a "Greater Albania," since before this crisis Macedonia showed tremendous respect for its Albanian minority, who should stay in the Macedonian nation (though these days have not been Macedonia's finest hour). As Albania tries to build its democracy, often succeeding, there is very little to fear from a stable, larger Albania. Let Serbia have the small portion of Kosovo which is historically and spiritually significant; give Albania the rest. PAUL C. GRISANTI
Bronx, N.Y.

Empire speaks

After *Commonweal*'s readiness to sacrifice a generation of Iraqi children to a still-failing embargo that church leaders have strongly condemned, one expected approval of the air attacks on Serbia and Kosovo [editorial, April 9]. These may well be no more productive of the desired result and eventually as tragic as the loss of innocent life in Iraq. Again not the voice of the gospel or even of just-war principles but of empire speaks, using the convenience of Milosevic's ubiquitous evil to gloss over our considerable villainy.

Milosevic's "willful arrogance" in 1989 may have initiated the present horror, but you do not explain to what you refer. (Nor do you explain why a Greater Albania for Albanians is "unacceptable and untenable.") A major cause, however, was the 1991 U.S. Foreign Operations Appropriation Law *which cut off all aid, trade, credits,*

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and loans to an economically unstable Yugoslavia until elections were held in each of its six republics, on which occasion we would (and did) provide funding for "democratic forces." The CIA predicted war as a consequence.

The right-wing nationalist governments of Slovenia and Croatia, declaring independence, opened their economies to U.S. investment. Recognizing the improved standard of living the Yugoslav federation had brought, Serbs overwhelmingly favored maintaining the federation and opposed further privatization or other capitalist inroads in their economy. And we know what happens to the Castros, Sandinistas, FMLN, Zapatistas, and anybody else who dares to put their national economic interests before ours. Before the first shot was fired, figuratively, Serbia, in resisting the march of empire, had become the Balkans' bogeyman.

Subsequently our meddling in Bosnia in support of Muslim domination triggered violence there. Determination to impose the Rambouillet terms designed to stop both Serb repression and KLA violence in Kosovo, without being prepared to send in ground troops if Milosevic refused to yield Serb control and stepped up his repression, was criminal. Yes, the Serbs have done the killing, but the NATO leaders are as guilty as Chamberlain of choosing a means to their end that put at risk the entire Albanian population of Kosovo because, collectively, NATO would not shed one drop of Western European or American blood.

Our conquest of the Balkans proceeds apace. We now effectively control the commercially important Danube River. We are well on the way to effecting the ruin of the one large Yugoslav republic that resists our economic control. As in Central America, no matter the hundreds of thousands of dead.

WILLIAM H. SLAVICK
Portland, Maine

Rites and wrongs

As a Greek Catholic layman, I find James Morgan's letter [Correspondence, March 26] an altogether under-

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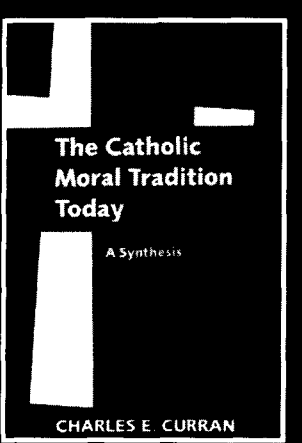

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standable Orthodox response to Jerry Ryan's "Back to the Future" [January 15]. However much an Orthodox Christian might be attracted to the ideal of the papacy, and however much he or she might admire the good intentions reflected in John Paul II's *Ut unum sint*, there is little in Rome's actual conduct that suggests papal power in a united church could be exercised in accordance with the model of Gregory I.

The sad story of my own Ukrainian Greek Catholic Particular Church offers little encouragement. Shunned by the Roman rite hierarchy and clergy when they arrived in America, and stripped by Rome of their historical right to a married clergy, many Greek Catholics in this country were driven from communion with Rome. Even after the Ukranian Greek church emerged from the catacombs in this decade, Rome did not challenge the Polish hierarchy when it sought to restrict our right to a married clergy there. In Ukraine itself, Rome has limited the territorial jurisdiction of our archbishop-major to Western Ukraine, allowed Roman dioceses to be established in the east, and limited our church's presence there to an *exarchate*. It is time for Rome to implement the eccelsiology so beautifully articulated in the pope's encyclicals.

A concluding thought: It is clear from Morgan's letter that Catholics do not have a monopoly on the tactics of arguing from the standpoint of the ideal to which their church ought to aspire. A thoughtful examination of the life of the various Orthodox communities in this country suggests that it goes too far to claim that they have "survived the past millennium unscathed by the horrible battles and viruses afflicting the West." The tensions that surfaced during the recent visit of the Ecumenical Patriarch, divisions among the various communities rooted in their ethnic heritages and the politics of Eastern Europe, growing disparities in liturgical practice from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and parish to parish, all these suggest that the Holy Spirit still has much work to do within the Orthodox communion in this country.

T.F. STOCK
Arlington, Va.

What if?

For sake of discussion, imagine the following hypothetical situation: An extremely radical "religious" group has decided that what goes on in Catholic churches is blasphemy and must, in the name of God, be stopped. Demonstrations, limited—usually—to hurling insults at parishoners attending Mass, have been common. Seven priests have been assassinated and an additional fourteen such murders have been attempted. Websites have displayed addresses of Catholic churches and featured "wanted" posters displaying photos of pastors (including "marking off" of those who have been murdered). Cash rewards have been offered for the prevention of blasphemies but two hundred churches have been bombmed or torched.

I presume that Edward Gaffney [Correspondence, March 26] would be equally sensitive about the free-speech rights of these scary demonstrators and website operators as he was about those of the American Coalition of Life Activists, but I see such a defense in either case as unconscionable.

I revere the principle of free speech but see its basis in the desire to provide for the free play of *ideas*; a threat, implicit or explicit, is not an idea in this sense. The website displays of the ACLA have exceeded, in my judgment, the limitation implicit in the principle of free speech. If the Supreme Court decisions cited by Gaffney justify such tactics as the ACLA has employed, then I would contend that the Court has erred (it does, you know, as its own reversals demonstrate).

Indeed, I am beginning to perceive in some protest demonstrations the emergence of a latent tendency to degrade the human dignity of those protested against. The ideal exercise of free speech lies in the exposition of rational arguments.

JOHN SPRADLEY
Pagosa Springs, Colo.

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IF YOU LOVE A BOOK, ABUSE IT

Katharine Byrne

A rare, serious housecleaning effort recently required that I move through the house, taking all the books off the shelves where many of them have stood moldering for years, encouraging me to think about each one. I found loving inscriptions from persons gone and not forgotten. Historical documents: letters and cards used as bookmarks. End papers written on, margins covered with comments and arguments. Ostensibly all of these were my books, but in an important way only those I had written in really *belonged* to me.

This in spite of repeated admonitions, "Never write in a book, nor dog-ear a page, nor set a book face-down on its open pages." You must not deface a book. What a word! Deface: To mar; spoil the appearance of; disfigure. Not really. To write in a book can be an act of love or at very least, an effort to understand it.

In *Ex Libris*, Anne Fadiman notes that there are two ways to love a book. Reading as a reverential act, a fond feeling that holds its object in highest esteem, but at a Platonic distance. The other way Fadiman calls "carnal," because it is deep, intimate, personal, sometimes turning into a wrestling match between reader and author.

Mortimer Adler, in *How to Read a Book*, says that a book is not really yours until you have responded to it with questioning, argument, contradiction; or assent and applause. Adler believed that if writing in books offends the rule you learned in third grade, you should buy a copy to keep as a piece of furniture and another copy to *read*.

The books I have really read are interlined and margin-filled with comments. The end papers and the insides of the covers are covered with quotations that I didn't want to lose.

I pick up a falling-apart paperback of Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*, a book about loss. I first read it at a time when I was overwhelmed by a loss that seemed insurmountable, blotting out any possibility that I might ever move on from it. A grieving woman in *Housekeeping* knows that moving on requires that she must "perform the rituals of the ordinary as an act of faith." And reminds herself that "what has perished need not be lost, for when do we know anything more utterly than when we have lost it?" Having written these lines inside the cover almost twenty years ago, I remember them. Nor can I forget the grandmother's imagining heaven as "a reunion at the other side of a lake, all those you had ever lost gathered there to meet you."

This copy of *Middlemarch* has seen hard use. I read it one long winter when all of our children were very young and I was helping to write a doctoral thesis not my own. Did I identify with the hapless Dorothea who, "while she longed to do work of her own which would be directly beneficent, like the sunshine and the rain," confined herself to a more noble goal: "to help someone who did great works, so that his burden would be lighter"?

Howard's End is all about connections and the difficulty and necessity of establishing them, but here inside the back cover is an ambitious recipe for dying. "One ought to die neither as a victim nor as a fanatic, but as the seafarer who can greet with an equal eye the deep that he is entering and the shore that he must leave."

Another book I have clearly wanted to hold onto is Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Love in the Time of Cholera*. My own comments fight for some open space even at the ends of chapters. Impossible to choose just one, except, perhaps, these rueful lines, cherished in my old age: "The heart's memory eliminates the bad and magnifies the good, and thanks to the charitable deceptions of nostalgia, we manage to endure the burden of the past."

Pushed into a far corner of a bottom shelf is a five-volume set of Dickens. Someone has observed that you should read Dickens when you are very young. No subtleties of characterization here; everybody wearing a placard around his neck. "Good guy." "Bad guy." "Fair-haired child." "Mean old man." In *Hard Times* the first page lines up the principals and defines each one unequivocally. "Mrs. Blackpool: a dissolute, drunken woman." "Stephen Blackpool: an honest, hard-working power-loom weaver." "Thomas Gradgrind: a selfish, ill-natured whelp."

Years later a character turns up as a friend or an enemy. When I was ten, the *Chicago Daily News* offered five volumes of Dickens free to anyone who bought a subscription. My father gave this precious premium to me. That whole hot summer I measured my own life and hard times against those of *David Copperfield*. Mr. Micawber, Little Nell, Mr. McChoakumchild, Aunt Betsy Trotwood, Miss Havisham: I can see them still because of Dickens's skillful depictions and because these were my books and I could write in them if I wanted to. Here they are now, shabby and yellowed, my pale-penciled notations barely readable. (It says here inside the cover of *David Copperfield*: "Uriah Heep and his mother are discusting creeps and hipacrits!") My first excursion into literary criticism. □

Katharine Byrne *writes from Chicago.*

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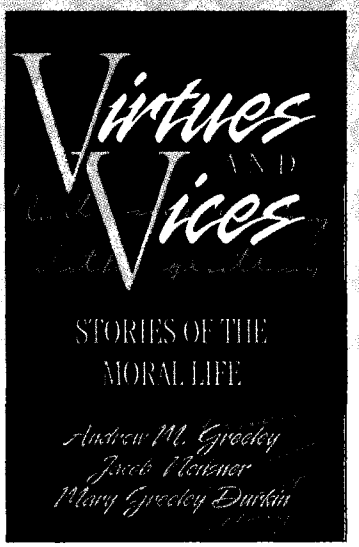

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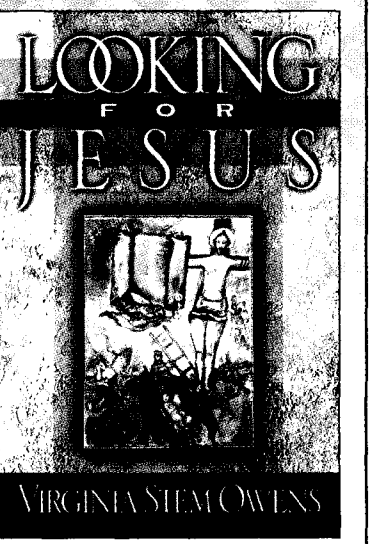

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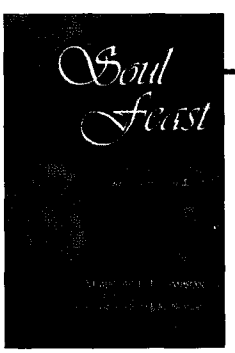

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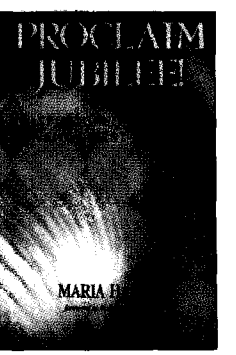

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